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POPULAR & PERFORMANCE

# CAR REVIEW



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55 Hood or trunk emblem, plastic	22.00 ea.
56 Front fender extensions	69.95 pr.
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55-57 Door panel kit	150.00 kit
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55-57 Carpet	135.00 ea.
55-57 Windshield rubber channels	38.95 ea.
55-57 Door weatherstrip	45.00 pair
55-57 Trunk weatherstrip	20.00 ea.
55-57 Rubber trunk mat	25.00 ea.
55-57 Starter & ignition wiring harness 8 cyl. auto or std.	31.95 ea.
57 Headlight/generator wiring harness	39.50 ea.
55-57 Gear shift handle, chrome plated w/knob	26.00 ea.
55-57 Locking gas cap	14.95 ea.
55-57 powerglide indicator wire, connects indicator needle to steering column	3.95 ea.
55-57 Steering column bearing goes in steering column shaft, includes horn contact plate & lead wire spring set	10.50 ea.
55-57 Horn repair kit, contains spring, insulator spring contact, oil can flat spring plate, plastic spacer ring, plastic bushing ring, screws	12.95 ea.
55-57 Electric wiper motors rebuilt	89.00 ea.
55-57 Heater control valve	19.50 ea.
55-56 Headlight switch	29.00 ea.
57 Headlight switch	16.95 ea.
55-57 Gas tank sending unit	18.95 ea.
55-57 Speedometer cable & casing assy	8.95 ea.
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55-57 Steering box overhaul kit	39.95 ea.
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Trunks	Air cleaners
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## 58-64 IMPALA PARTS

58-64 Sedan door weatherstrip	40.00 pr.
58-64 Hdtp & Conv door weatherstrip	60.00 pr.
59-64 Hdtp roof rail weatherstrip	60.00 pr.
59-64 Rear quarter window weatherstrip	5.95 ea.
58-64 Replacement Windowfelt™ Kits, 8 precut strips w/attached fasteners, specify hdtp or conv	49.95 kit
58-64 Trunk weatherstrip	22.50 ea.
58-64 Battery trays	24.95 ea.
61-64 Hood insulation kits	20.00 kit
62-64 Front license plate panel, specify year	39.95 ea.
63-64 Rear license plate panel, specify year	39.95 ea.
58-64 A-Frame dust shields	12.95 pr.
62-64 Dome lamp lens, sport coupe	5.95 pr.
59-64 Door bumpers, set of 4	3.50 set
59-63 Plastic trunk emblems	22.00 ea.
61-64 "Body By Fisher" door sill plates, 2 dr.	39.95 pr.

## CAMARO PARTS

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67-75 Trunk weatherstrip	19.95 pr.
67-69 Replacement Windowfelt™ kits, contain 8 pre-cut strips w/attached fasteners, specify coupe or conv., 68 specify w/ or w/o deluxe reveal molding	49.95 kit
67-69 Rubber stopper kit, stoppers for hood, doors, trunk & console, 16 pcs.	12.10 kit
67-69 Paint gasket set-gaskets to remount door handles, locks, mirror, antenna & lamps.	
67 Std.	14.95 set
68 Std.	17.95 set
67-68 RS supplement to std. kit	6.50 set
69 Std. or RS	19.95 set
67-69 Hood to cowl seal (top of firewall)	8.50 ea.
67-69 A-frame & wheel well dust shield set, 5 pcs.	16.95 set
67-69 Body mount kit	32.95 kit
67-69 Body mount bolt kit	12.95 kit
67-69 Front end sheet metal fastener kit	25.95 kit
67-72 Rear package shelf cardboard, black, blue, red	19.95 ea.
67-69 Battery tray	14.95 ea.
67-69 Hood insulation kit, w/clips, for regular hood	24.95 kit
67-69 Hood insulation with, w/clips for cowl induction hood	26.95 kit
67-69 Door sill plates	15.95 ea.
67-69 Frt. fender & rear qtr. wheel well moldings	23.95 ea.
67-69 Std. rocker panel moldings	20.15 ea.
67-69 Consoles, used	Call for Price
67-69 SS hoods, used	Call for Price

67-68 R/S rocker panel moldings, 6 pcs., specify year	149.95 set
67-68 R/S rocker panel molding clip set, specify year	17.95 set
67-68 Trunk spoiler	76.75 ea.
69 Trunk spoiler	83.50 ea.

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67 "Camaro" nameplate for header panel & rear end panel	6.10 ea.
67 "Chevrolet" nameplate for header panel & rear end panel	9.00 ea.
68-69 "Camaro by Chevrolet" nameplate for header panel & rear end panel	7.95 ea.
67-68 "SS" grille emblem for R/S grille	19.95 ea.
68 "SS" grille emblem for std. grille	13.95 ea.
69 "RS" grille emblem	18.95 ea.
67 396 turbo jet X-flags	32.00 pr.
67 V-crossed flags for front fender	4.95 ea.
67 "Camaro" nameplate for front fender	7.50 ea.
68-69 "Camaro" nameplate for front fender	6.50 ea.

## CHEVELLE PARTS

64-67 Door sill plates, 2 dr.	49.00 pr.
64-66 Outside rearview mirror w/Chevy bootie	37.95 ea.
64-72 Window felt kits, 8 felt strips, specify year, coupe or conv.	49.95 kit
65-67 396 Turbo jet frt. fender x-flags	32.00 pr.
64-72 Rear package shelf, 2 dr. hdtp, blk, blue	19.95 ea.
64-67 Hdtp & conv. door w-s with molded ends	60.00 pr.
64-72 Sedan door weatherstrip	60.00 pr.
64-67 Hdtp roof rail weatherstrip	60.00 pr.
64-67 Hood to cowl seal	8.50 ea.
64-67 Quarter window weatherstrip, specify coupe or conv.	9.95 pr.
68-72 Quarter window weatherstrip	12.95 pr.
64-72 Trunk weatherstrip	19.95 ea.
64-72 Trunk mats	25.00 ea.

## CHEVY BOOKS AND MANUALS

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55 Shop Manual	20.00 ea.
56 Shop Manual sup. to 55	10.00 ea.
57 Shop Manual	20.00 ea.
55-57 Factory Assembly Manuals	20.00 ea.
55 Truck Shop Manual	20.00 ea.
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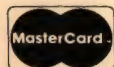
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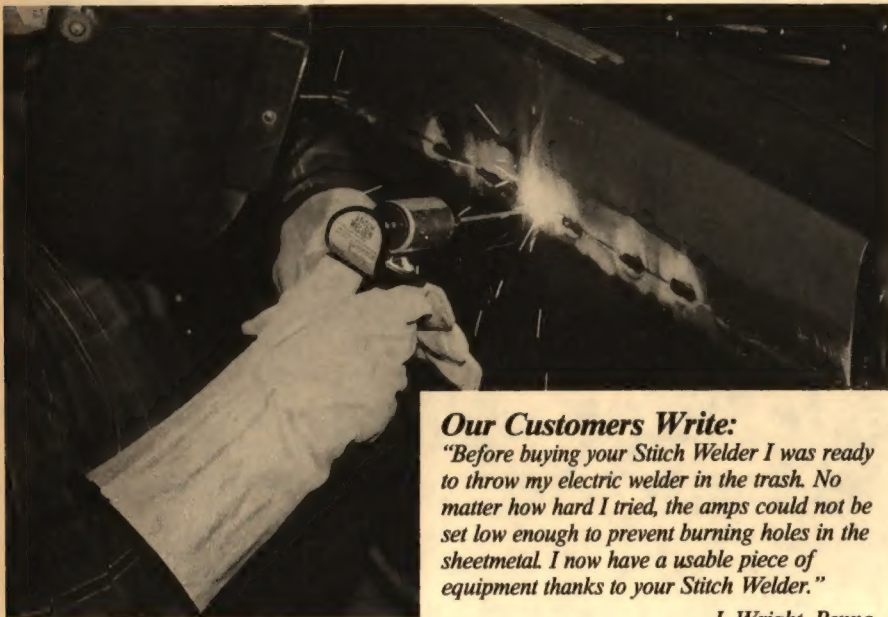
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# POPULAR & PERFORMANCE CAR REVIEW

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MARCH 1986



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### Cover

A long expanse of hood and Pontiac's famous shaker scoop radiates under the camera of Donald Farr. The Lucerne Blue 455 HO Trans Am is owned by Gary Grillo, while the 1964 A/FX Comet belongs to Brent and Terrie Hajek. The famous matchrace dragster was driven by Dyno Don Nicholson and held numerous NHRA records. Photos by Donald Farr.



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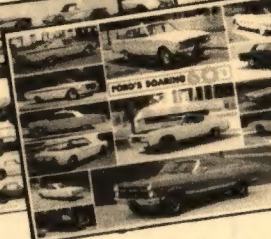
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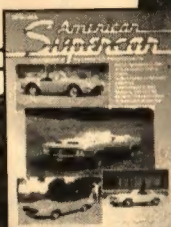
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		1953-1964 Vette.....	(Specify Year)

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**February 22, 23** - 1st Annual Southeastern United States Antique & Collector Car Firearms Auction. Billy Bob's, Inc., Pompano Beach, FL.

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# Car Talk

by Paul Zazarine

I can trace my passion for cars back to when I was real little. I wasn't content to play with blocks, because some of my earliest memories are of cutting the cars out of magazine ads with my plastic safety scissors.

I remember sitting on the fence along the road in front of our house that overlooked the highway. My dad and I would sit and talk and watch the stream of cars leaving Washington, D.C. as the evening rush hour wore on. It was on those days in the gathering dusk that I would identify makes of cars and name them, one by one, to my dad. I was five years old then, and if it hadn't been for the pickup trucks and pre-war cars, I could've named them all.

Each September, before the new cars would be introduced, we'd drive around and try to peek into the whitewashed showroom windows. When the new cars were finally introduced, my dad and I would hit the showrooms and check out the new finned Chryslers or the bat-winged Chevrolets. We took home one of the first Corvairs in Washington, D.C. in the early fall of 1959, and were usually the first in line for the Auto Show.

As a sixth grader, each trip to the grocery store was an opportunity to purchase a copy of *Motor Trend* or *Car Craft*. The rest of the day was spent devouring every line and every ad. I would reread the road tests and dream of someday being able to road test new cars and write about "the feel behind the wheel." My friends talked about growing up to be jet pilots or play for the Yankees, but I wanted to test drive cars for *Hot Rod*. A few years later, my teenage friends and I reveled in Beach Boy music and argued over which car was fastest and the neatest. We stood around the drum of adolescent benchracing (although we were still years away from learner's permits), beating out the engine RPMs and horsepower figures and quarter-mile times.

I was a child of the sixties, and that meant dreaming of driving cars. I spent my 15th birthday filling out a learner's permit application, and then driving back from the DMV in my dad's '62 T-Bird convertible. He was the best teacher a 15 year old ever had, but when the T-Bird got sick on the day of my driver's test (my 16th birthday), I ended up borrowing my boss' 1956 VW bug with the bum reverse linkage. Everytime I tried to parallel

park, it would pop out of reverse. Thanks to my after school job at the gas station, I had learned to drive a stick. If I had failed that driver's test, my life would have essentially been over before it had begun.

It was an era of cheap cars and cheap gas, when two bucks would buy an entire Saturday night's worth of cruising. I would spend all day cleaning up the old man's T-Bird. He got a clean car and I got a class ride for the evening. Of course, the 'Bird was no slouch, and I wouldn't hesitate to powerbrake that baby at the traffic light. It was so neat to watch the left front fender rise up as the 390 strained against the brake pedal. My shenanigans guaranteed that I'd wipe out a pair of two ply rear tires. Hey dad, remember the blown tranny in the T-Bird? I admit it — I'm the one who roached it. What? You already knew that? I guess you just couldn't slip much past the old man.

He helped me buy my first car the Christmas of 1968, a white '63 Olds convertible. Probably to give the T-Bird a break. With the top down, the radio on and my girlfriend snuggled close, that Olds ragtop provided some great memories that tug at my heart today. Sure the left quarter was bashed in, sure the front end was loose, I didn't care. I literally waxed the paint off the sheet metal. That baby was mine.

A passel of cars drifted past, like the '66 four-speed Mustang with Pony interior I passed up for a '66 Charger. Or the Chevelle SS, the 4-4-2, or (gulp) Vega GTs or the vans or the Formula Firebirds. For all the cars that have passed through my hands, there is one particular 1966 GTO that I've held onto. Right now it sits at a friend's garage in Maryland waiting to be restored and brought home. I've owned it for almost ten years, and that old Goat is my own means of reaching back over two decades to events and people and songs and places that shaped my life.

I suppose it was inevitable that I'd end up photographing and writing about the cars that I read and dreamed about 20 years ago. Some sort of guiding hand of fate may have had something to do with it. Maybe it was those times with my dad, sitting on the fence in front of our house and watching the cars go by. I wonder what would have happened if that highway hadn't been there...



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# ROLLIN' *Readers*

Rollin' Readers is a monthly feature in *Car Review*. If you'd like for your car to appear, send a sharp, clear photo, preferably in black and white, along with a description of the car, to Rollin' Readers, *Car Review*, P.O. Drawer 7157, Lakeland, Florida 33807. If you want the photo to be returned, please include an SASE.

Vince Lena of Alexandria, Louisiana loves to drive his 1968 CAMARO convertible with the top down every chance he gets. He's owned it for six years, and has recently begun restoring his Camaro by applying a new coat of Grotto Blue lacquer. Options include 350 engine, automatic with floor shifter and center console, rear spoiler and power top. A set of later model wheels and front spoiler make Vince's Camaro a real attention getter.



Rod Fariss is proud of his 1970 1/2 TRANS AM and rightly so. This rare four-speed version is powered by the 335 horsepower Ram Air III engine. The power is applied to the pavement via a 3.73 Safe-T-Trak limited slip 10 bolt rear. The Roanoke, VA Trans Am has only 59,000 garage kept miles and wears its original coat of Cameo White paint. Rob's license plate says "2ND TA," which stands for the second generation of Trans Ams that were introduced in January of 1970.

Denver, Colorado is where you'll find Dave Haley's 1974 Plymouth DUSTER. You'll also find out this Duster is no dud, thanks to a 360 cube, four barrel high performance engine. Options include a four-speed transmission and 3.55:1 limited slip rear. The Lemon Yellow Duster sports a black vinyl top and white interior. With only 58,000 miles, Dave tells us the Duster runs as good as some big blocks. He ought to know, since he's also restoring a 440 cube 1970 GTX.



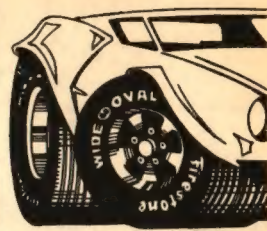
Darius Kadagian may be in Korea right now doing his hitch in the Army, but his heart is in his 1972 Oldsmobile 4-4-2 coupe. Darius tells us the Radiant Green paint and white interior is all original. The big 455 cubic inch engine was standard in all 1972 4-4-2s, and while it was a capable performer, Darius has installed an Edelbrock Torker intake manifold with Holley 750 double pumper carburetor and Blackjack headers to make a fast car even faster.

For Ed Snyder of Perkasio, Pennsylvania, spending two and a half years on the restoration of his 1964 Falcon SPRINT was worth the effort. This Burgundy beauty proves that good things come in small packages, thanks to a 260 cubic inch powerplant with chrome dress-up kit and four-speed gearbox. The black interior features bucket seats with console, wood wheel and the rare, dash mounted factory tachometer. Ed says his 110,000 mile Sprint gets a lot of double takes and good comments at car shows.





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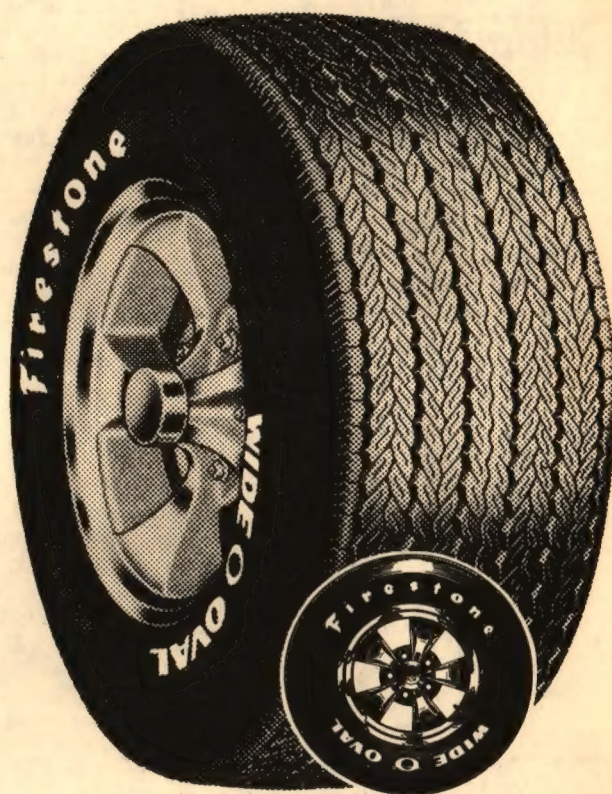
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# Post Exchange

## Looking For AMX

How about a feature on the two-seater AMX, including the AMX III? I recently met the owner of the '71 two seater prototype which never made production. As far as I know, this is the only one in existence. The car is located here in Wisconsin.

Jeff DeRoche  
Portage, WI

I'm presently restoring a 1971 Hornet SC360. I've enjoyed your AMC coverage and all the other makes. Have you ever heard of a "D" Dart brought out to run in NHRA D stock around 1965-66? It made 275 hp out of the 273 cube engine. How about an AMX III article? Only six of the mid-engine Italian bodied sports cars were made.

Gary Timmerman  
Spanish Lake, MD

*We understand Dick Teague recently sold the AMX III to a collector in Georgia. Perhaps he could contact us and arrange a photo session. - Ed.*

## Movie Time

You mentioned *Two Lane Blacktop* recently which has prompted me to write. I have tried to rent or purchase a copy of this incredible flick. Could *Car Review* please help?

Dave Walker  
Laguna Higuell, CA

*Copies of Two Lane Blacktop are available from Robert McKenzie, 114 Prince George Drive, Hampton, VA 23669. Write him for prices and availability. - Ed.*

## Slick Response

I really enjoyed the retest of the 440 Six Pack Super Bee in your December issue. I was curious to see just how much the slicks helped on both the 454 Chevelle and the Super Bee. Now I can relate their times to that of the GS Stage 1 and Hemi GTX. In light of this, it is even more amazing that the GS ran a 12.30 through the mufflers. Awesome!

Dal Burton  
Amelia Island, FL

## Difference Of Opinion

I would like to point out something you and your readers are missing. On the note of favoring cars, it's interesting to note the difference of opinion. Everyone seems to have a favorite car, mine being Chevy. But I am getting a little tired of hearing how great the LS-6 Che-

velles are, as well as Hemis, 427 Cobras and Buick Stage 1s. While it is true that the cars deserve the reputation they have established, it should be noted that a car is only as good or as fast as its driver.

For example, assume I bought an LS6 Chevelle and took it to a local drag strip and ran a 14.80. A guy comes over and wants to know if he can make a pass in the Chevelle. I say okay, and he clicks off a 13.07 at nearly 110 mph. He then tells me he's Lee Shepard — the drag racer! The point is, he's much better than me and it shows on the time slip. So while you can brag about your Hemi Cuda being capable of running low 13s, who's to say that you can put it there?

Garrett Pierce  
Charlotte, MI

O.K., just who are you Buick owners trying to convince when you say that your jazzed-up Skylarks (read GS) are faster than the Hemi? History proves the Hemi is the greatest American racing engine of all time. Remember Ronnie Sox and Buddy Martin? How about Bobby Isaacs? Someone stirred you guys up, and now that's all we hear about is the Buick GS. The Stage 1 started life in an Electra, the Hemi started life on the racetracks. Why don't you guys just simmer down and live with the fact that Mopar is number one, it always has been and always will be!

Mike Stoessel

*Oh no. Here we go again. - Ed.*

I own and weekend race a 1969 Nova SS 396 (spot #32 on the 50 Fastest). Even though I'm a devout Chevy man, I can't contest the spot occupied by the GS. At our local track east of Pittsburgh, I lined up against a 1970 GS Stage 1 loaded with options. The car had the stock carb and intake. Thinking I'd get the best of him, I came out of the staging lights hard. Even though he had his exhausts hooked up and I didn't, he ran a 13.0 to my 13.3. Whew! I'd like to see an indepth article on the GS Stage 1 similar to the one you did on the W cars.

Larry Simmons  
Clairton, PA

Obviously, Will Rogers never met Roy Badie!

Greg Rager  
Johnstown, PA

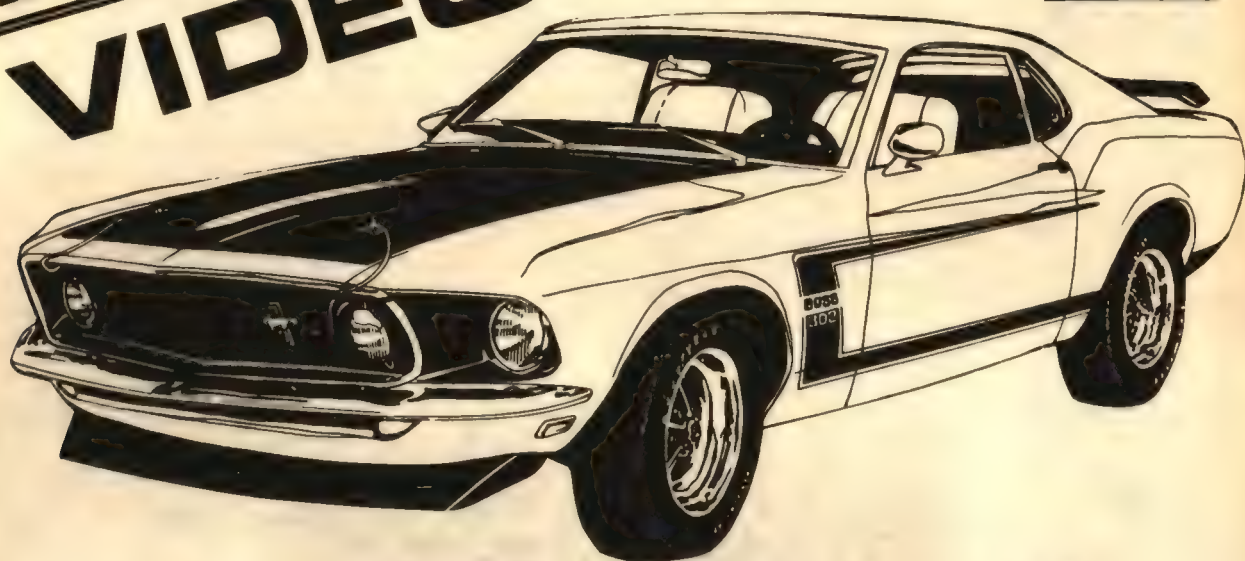
## Old Tales

Your article on the Olds W-Machines in the January *Car Review* was excellent. However, one point about the greatness

*Continued On Page 10*



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## Post Exchange

*Continued From Page 8*

of the W31 was missed. I know most of your readers are only concerned with straight line performance. However, I did a lot of gymkanas and auto crossing in the late sixties/early seventies, and I can tell you the W31s put everything away, including GTOs and W30s! The high revving engine and tight Olds suspension just couldn't be matched by anything in our area. W30s ran a close second and then the GTOs. Chrysler and Ford guys just stayed home. Except me. I ran a big block Cougar and replaced front tires about every two months.

So if you're gonna race all the way to deadman's curve you'd better have a W31!

Bob Lichty  
Carlisle, PA

*Bob Lichty is co-author of the book, Hurst Heritage. - Ed.*

Congratulations to you and your staff on a great magazine. I would like to clear up one error in the January issue. The W-Machines article states that the 1965 4-4-2 engine was 350 horsepower. Actually, the '65 version was 345 horsepower and used a Rochester 4GC carburetor.

*Continued On Page 12*

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CAR  
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☐ May 17-18, Bristol International  
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☐ July 18-20 Maple Grove Raceway  
Mohnton, PA

☐ April 5-6, Green Valley Raceway  
North Richland Hills, TX

☐ June 7-8, U.S. 131 Dragway  
Martin, MI

☐ July 25-27, Indianapolis Raceway  
Park, Indianapolis, IN

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1986

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

March 22-23

**SUPER CHEVY SUNDAY**  
Moroso Motorsports Park  
W. Palm Beach, Florida

April 5-6

**SUPER CHEVY SUNDAY**  
Green Valley Raceway  
No. Richland Hills, Texas

May 17-18

**SUPER CHEVY SUNDAY**  
Bristol Int'l. Raceway  
Bristol, Tennessee

June 7-8

**SUPER CHEVY SUNDAY**  
U.S. 131 Dragway  
Martin, Michigan

July 18-20

**SUPER CHEVY SUNDAY**  
Maple Grove Raceway  
Mohnton, Pennsylvania

July 25-27

**SUPER CHEVY SUNDAY**  
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## Post Exchange

*Continued From Page 10*

retor. The engine wasn't 350 hp until 1966 when Oldsmobile switched to the Quadra-Jet.

Dan Altana

Franklin Lanes, NJ

## Yes, No, Maybe

I would think that if the GTO name is applied to an upscale front wheel drive Grand Am, Pontiac would please the BMW crowd and alienate 95% of the current GTO lovers. But if the GTO name applied to the rear wheel drive Grand Prix, with the right performance and appearance items, then Pontiac will have a car that rivals the Monte Carlo SS and pleases the real GTO lover. So the question is not should Pontiac use the GTO name, but what market segment is Pontiac trying to target?

A GTO Grand Am: Pontiac can keep it.

A GTO Grand Prix: How soon can I order one?

Brian Edward  
Syracuse, NY

*How could a real GTO lover drive a Pontiac powered by a Chevy engine? For your dream Grand Prix, take a look at this month's Idle Chatter. - Ed.*

As the long-time owner of a '66 GTO convertible, I would favor the return of

*Continued On Page 14*

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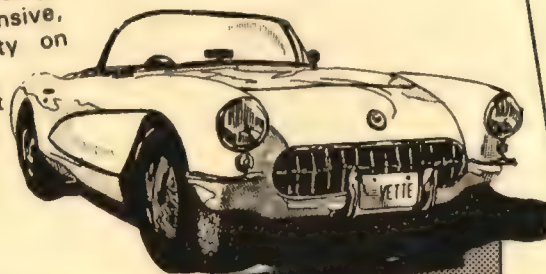


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## Post Exchange

the GTO badge, but, *only* if the new model exceeds the GTO heritage of high-performance by giving us an even quicker, better handling, better braking automobile. And, at a price equivalent to my '66 in inflation-adjusted dollars. Otherwise, may GTO RIP.

John Drilling  
Milwaukee, WI

In response to your recent "Yes or No to GTO" article in *Idle Chatter*, I would have to add that the "new" GTO would have to be something special. All front wheel drive automobiles are limited in horsepower because of the very design, and that is why a number of manufacturers are opting for 4-wheel drive.

If Pontiac decides to return the GTO to the showroom floors with a 16 valve engine, then it should *seriously consider* the 4 wheel drive route. It would definitely establish the Goat as the performance automobile it was in its heyday.

Donald D. Chamberlin  
Grand Island, NY

Re: New GTO.  
NO! NO! NO! NO! NO!

David Matthews  
Raleigh, NC

Can we quote you? - Ed.

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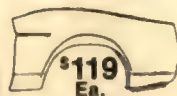
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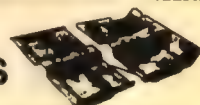
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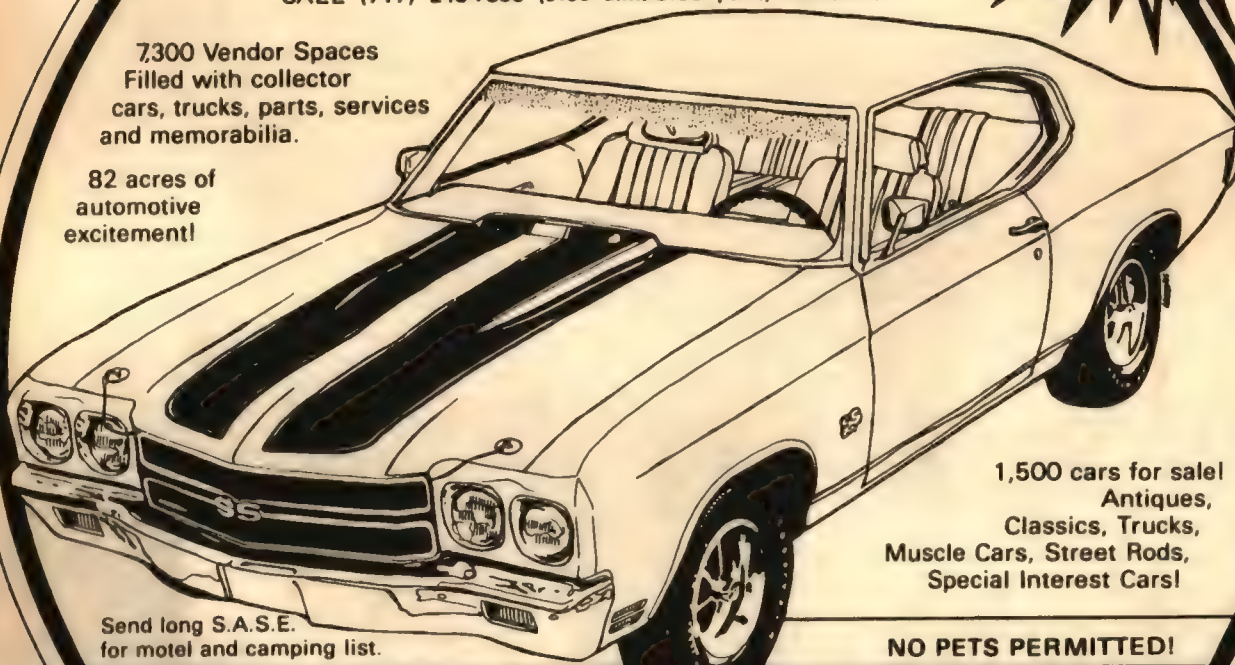
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# idle chatter

## NEW NEWS!



### 2 + 2 = NASCAR

The press release says nothing about racing, but you can bet that you'll see Richard Petty in one of these 1986 Pontiac 2+2s during this year's NASCAR season. Based on the Grand Prix, the 2+2 features a Monte Carlo SS-like front end treatment, a deep front spoiler, a bubble-back rear window treatment and a fiberglass rear spoiler. A no-option model, the 2+2 comes standard with a 165-horse 5.0

liter V-8, four-speed overdrive automatic transmission, tuned suspension, Eagle GT tires on 15x7-inch Rally II wheels, Rally instrumentation, AM/FM stereo cassette, air conditioning, cruise control, dual sport mirrors and power windows and door locks. Production models are painted silver with medium gray lower trim, but look for at least one bright blue one with orange STP lettering on the race track.



### MORE NEWS

Beginning January 1st, Chevrolet began offering a new sloped rear backlight (fastback) option on the Monte Carlo SS, an apparent attempt to decrease aerodynamic drag for the NASCAR racers. Traditional formal rear glass SSs will also be offered...Ford is moving ahead with plans to build a high performance two-seat sports car. Dubbed the GN34, the French-built mid-engine car will be supervised by Ford's Special

Vehicle Operations and will retail for around \$25,000. Reportedly, the GN34 gets a new four-valve 3.0 Liter V-6 with up to 250 horsepower...The next generation Camaro, along with the Pontiac Firebird, may be produced in Pontiac, Michigan. Those Camaros and Firebirds, scheduled for 1989 or 1990, will feature plastic body panels like the current Fiero, which is built in the same Pontiac complex.

### END OF AN ERA

As we go to press, it appears that Hurst Performance, a magic name to musclecar buffs, will cease to exist as a company. Rumor has it the Mr. Gasket Company will purchase it from parent firm Cars and Concepts and move Hurst to Cleveland. The Hurst facility in Warminster, Pennsylvania had been reduced to a skeleton crew in the fall of

1985. A number of top staff personnel were fired the week before Christmas, the locks have been changed and no one at Hurst is talking.

Word has it that a buyer has already been lined up for the huge Warminster plant. It's not known at this time whether the Hurst name will appear on the Mr. Gasket line of shifters.



### MILESTONE MUSCLECARS

Two American performance cars have been inducted into the Milestone Car Society's list of certified cars. The 1970 Chrysler 300 Hurst and the 1968-70 AMXs, along with the 1946 Cadillac 75 Sedan/Limo and several foreign cars, met the MCS's criteria for excellence in at

least two of the following areas: styling, engineering, performance, innovation and craftsmanship. To receive a complete list of certified Milestone cars, send an SASE to: The Milestone Car Society, P.O. Box 50850, Indianapolis, IN 46250.



OLDSMOBILE



PERFORMANCE  
CHAPTER

### CLUB FOR OLDS PERFORMANCE

Give us 30 lashes with a GM spark plug wire. In January's "W-Machines" issue, we failed to mention the Oldsmobile Performance Chapter of the Oldsmobile Club of America, and the OPC guys let us know it. So here's the scoop for Oldsmobiles with scoops: Devoted to Oldsmobile musclecars, the Oldsmobile Performance Chapter is geared especially for owners of 4-4-2s, Hurst-Olds, W-30s, W-31s and other performance-oriented Oldsmobiles. The \$12.00 membership fee provides 12 monthly issues of *W-Machines* magazine, a club publication that offers car profiles, technical information, performance tips and other Oldsmobile-related info. During August 1-2, the OPC will invade the Southern Park Mall in Youngstown, Ohio, for the Oldsmobile Performance Chapter's national meet with a car show, swap meet, cruise and drag racing. For more information about the OPC and the national meet, write: OPC, c/o Tim Joyce, 8459 Hitchcock Road, Youngstown, OH 44512.

### NATIONAL MUSCLECLUB

We knew it would happen sooner or later. With interest in musclecars booming, Frank Spittle has organized the *Elite Muscle Car Association*, a national club aimed at the cars from the 1955-73 high performance years. Right from the start, the EMCA boasts a bi-monthly magazine (with member profiles, nostalgic "notebooks," meet reports and news from the musclecar hobby), an insurance program and an information library for members, plus a schedule of Muscle Car Rallies consisting of drag races (in four classes: 1958-64 full-size Super Stock and AFX, 1955-73 Muscle Car Showdown for stock appearing musclecars on D.O.T. approved street tires and pre-1979 model bracket racing), car show, swap meet and musclecar corral. The first EMCA Rally is set for June 7-8 at Piedmont Dragway in Greensboro, North Carolina. Other dates will be announced later. For more information about the Elite Muscle Car Association and their Rallies, write: EMCA, P.O. Box 490, Cornelius, NC 28031. Memberships cost \$25 per year, or two years for \$45.

### CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

In last October's "Coming Events" column, the sponsor of the Ford-Lincoln-Mercury Nationals East, scheduled for October 12-13, 1985, was mistakenly identified as the Performance Ford Club of America. In actuality, the event was put on by the National Ford-Mercury Association, a club no longer associated with the PFCA. We regret the mistake.



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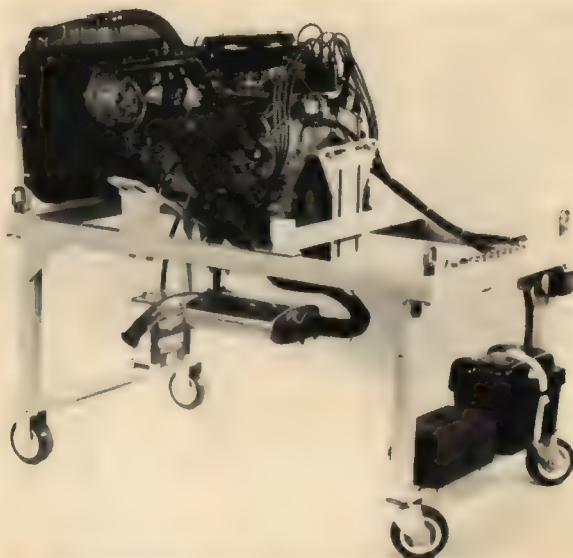
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# parts department



## STANDING ALIVE

*Product Assembly Service* has just introduced the LES-2000 "live" engine stand, a high strength steel frame designed to support a running engine. Standard equipment includes universal mounts, rolling casters, electrical controls, battery box, fuel tank, engine

mounting hardware, and parts storage box. Other options are available. For additional information, contact: *Product Assembly Service*, 5410 SE International Way, Dept. CR, Milwaukee, WI 97222.



## PONY PADS

To compliment their early Mustang arm rest pads, *California Mustang* has just introduced new reproduction arm rest pads for 1969-70 and 1971-73 Mustangs with the standard interior door panel. Foam filled and molded like the originals, the pads also include metal inserts and the exact Sierra grain finish for the ultimate in authenticity. Available now in black only, other colors are coming soon. For additional information, contact: *California Mustang*, 1249 E. Holt Blvd., Dept. CR, Pomona, CA 91767, (714) 623-6551 or out-of-state toll free (800) 854-1737.



## THE BEARING DETAILS

To many engine rebuilders, when it comes to engine bearings, *Clevite 77* is the only brand to go with. Problem is, the *Clevite* brand can be a little difficult to find. *Crane Cams* has solved that problem, as they are now distributing the *Clevite 77* bearing line through their dealers under the *Crane Cams Engine Bearing* label. *Crane* plans to offer connecting rod sets, main bearing sets and cam bearing sets in standard sizes. For more information, contact *Crane Cams*, 100 Northwest Terrace, Dept. CR, Hallandale, FL 33009.



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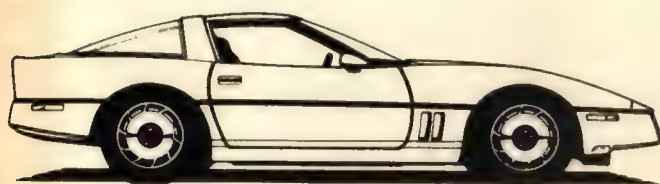
## SIX PACK TO GO

Back in the days when musclecars were considered used cars, searching for NOS carburetors wasn't a job — it was an adventure in frustration. Now that musclecar restoration is in full swing, parts availability is getting better. A good example is *Direct Connection's* release of replacement carburetors for owners of Mopar Six Pack equipped musclecars. These OEM carburetors fit 1969-71 440 6 bbl as well as the 1970 340 6 bbl engines. For more information send \$4 for the 1986 *Direct Connection* catalog, 20026 Progress Drive, Dept. CR, Strongsville, OH 44136.





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# HORSE *Power*



## Monsters Of The Mid-Sizes

---

Racing built the Fairlanes and Torinos into  
fire-breathing 427s and 428 Cobra Jets.

---

by Phil Hall

Editor's note: When the premier issue of Car Exchange appeared in April of 1979, Phil Hall's Horsepower column was an integral part of the magazine's format. When CE merged with Classic Sixties to become Car Review in 1984, Horsepower came along for the ride. Beginning in April, Horsepower will return to the pages of the new Car Exchange, which has been revived by Dobbs Publications. You can order up 12 months of Car Exchange for only \$14.97 by calling 1-800-237-1038.

Illogical disappointment, that's what it was. About 15 years ago, I was looking for something newer to drive and came upon a nice, used 1969 Ford Fairlane Torino GT SportsRoof (fastback). It was bright red, in good shape, had low mileage and the price was right.

Before the test drive, the fact was clearly known that it only had a 302 and Cruise-O-Matic and that it was not a trick Cobra or Talladega model. Nevertheless, the test drive proved a major disappointment. Mechanically,

the car checked out fine, the body and interior were very good for a two-year old car and no apparent problems surfaced. However, it was just an ordinary car.

What else would you expect, you ask?

Well, even though deep down inside I knew better, I somehow expected the sleek Torino to transform this Walter Mitty into David Pearson at Talladega or Jack Bowsher at Milwaukee — I'd even have settled for Dick Trickle on a short track. All drove the sleek fastbacks successfully in stock car racing — in which I was very interested at the time.

None of the above happened. Instead, the gleaming red FoMoCo intermediate just started, stopped, went around corners and generally went about its business like most other cars. There was no magic. The car was returned to the lot and left there without so much as a whisper of haggling.

My reaction to the Torino wasn't all emotional immaturity, but rather I was a victim of an extensive campaign by Ford to build the car into a legend,

honed by extensive racing involvement and equally extensive winning.

Having a performance image was everything in the late sixties, especially if you wanted to sell sporty compact and intermediate cars to the youth market, which was strong at the time. No one was more adept at converting ordinary cars into such image material than Ford. While it did turn out some truly muscular stuff like the Boss 302 and 429 Mustangs, most of the cars with big shadows had a hard time in the real world keeping up with the big guns from Chrysler and General Motors.

Ford backed racing teams in NASCAR, USAC, ARCA, SCCA Trans-Am and drag racing and saw to it they got the best parts, which weren't readily available to the non-factory teams, let alone the average guy on the street. As a result, with cubic dollars and trick parts, Fords were winners in almost every area of endeavor. This sold cars like crazy in the highly competitive musclecar market.

But back to the 1969 Torino. Actually, both the 1968 and 1969



Torinos were part of the Fairlane sub-make. It wasn't until the 1970 models came out that Ford gave its intermediates the Torino sub-make designation.

Introduced as a 1962 model, the Fairlane did a bit of pioneering in the intermediate field. It fell between the compact Falcon and large sized Ford with a 115.5-inch wheelbase, overall length of 197.8 inches and width of just over 71 inches.

The engine room wasn't a problem when the car was designed to chase the economical Rambler in the early sixties, but that would hurt the Fairlane later in the decade when the competition was putting in 400-plus cubic inch powerplants. Initially the Fairlane had to be content with a 289.

The basic 1962 model stayed around through the 1965 model year and was largely left out of hot intermediate battles — with the exception of the limited production 1964 Thunderbolt, which was specially made for drag racing and motivated by a healthy 427.

Fairlane got its first full restyling for 1966 and, more important, some much needed space in the engine compartment. Though the basic suspension design remained the same, there was now room for a big-block.

Overall size remained close to the original, making for a tight, right package. At first, Ford announced that its aged 390 would be the biggest engine available in the 1966 Fairlane. On paper, its 335 horsepower looked like a good warrior for the 389-inch 335-horse Pontiac GTO; in real life, it didn't turn out that way.

It didn't take long for the discouraging word to reach Dearborn that the Mopars, GTOs, SS396 Chevelles and Olds 4-4-2s were eating the 390 Fairlanes alive in the stock classes on the nation's drag strips. The reaction was a limited run of 427-powered 1966 Fairlanes (they had the scooped hoods). These cars were fast, but again they weren't for the masses.

For 1967 the Fairlane was slightly facelifted with trim changes. The 427 was back, still a limited production offering, but it wasn't the secret it was the year before, as Ford advertised it in the buff books.

For the model years 1966 through 1971, Ford restyled its intermediates every two years, but it left the basic chassis design the same. That meant a new suit of tin for the 1968 models, a needed change, because both General Motors and Chrysler also did a restyle on their 1968 intermediates.

Fairlane styling was on a larger

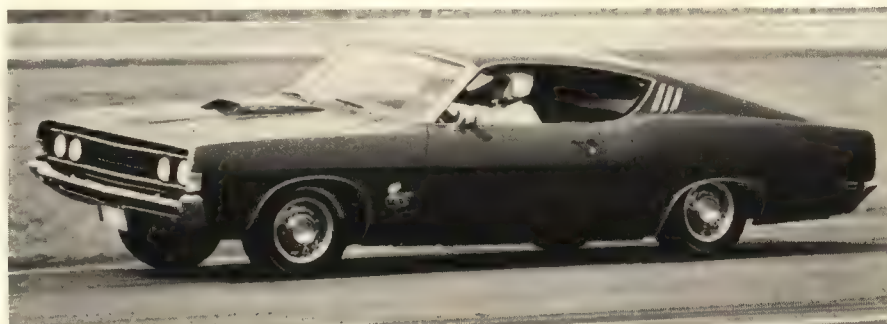
*Continued On Page 59*



*The Fairlane's performance heritage goes all the way back to 1964 when Ford assaulted the drag strips with the Thunderbolts, a Fairlane-based quarter-mile terror with a full-boogie 427, lightweight front end and headlight openings for ram air tubes.*



*In its last year on the original body were the 1965 Ford Fairlanes. This Fairlane 500 Sports Coupe's most potent engine was a 271-horse version of the 289 small block V8.*



*A new addition to the 1969 Fairlane lineup was the Cobra, which came with a 428 standard and snake-infested exterior.*



*To counter the competition, Ford brought out the mid-year Torino Talladega SportsRoof for 1969. A limited run was made to make it legal to race. The car featured an extended, sloped nose.*



# WONDER BIRDS



Pontiac Motor Division

Pontiac set its sights on the Corvette and came up with the 1969-74 Trans Am Firebirds.

by Paul Zazarine

**B**lame it on the Corvette. Because of America's only two-seat sports car, a rake in Pontiac's claw throughout the sixties, Pontiac General Manager John DeLorean wanted desperately to build a two-seater with the Pontiac nameplate. Three times during the decade, DeLorean went to GM management with concepts for a Pontiac version of the Corvette, and each time his presentations were rejected on the basis that there wasn't enough two-place business to split between Chevrolet and Pontiac.

Realizing that he couldn't out-Corvette the Corvette, DeLorean turned to the Firebird to create a ponycar-sized Corvette competitor. Since the Corvette had a sporty, racy image, planners chose to name this new Firebird after the SCCA's Trans-Am racing circuit. A concept Firebird known as the PFST (Pontiac Firebird Sprint Turismo), being developed by engineer Herb Adams, was picked as the Trans Am platform. It had the

stiffer suspension, scoops and stripes that DeLorean wanted to convey the racing image of the car. Under development was a small-block racing engine that would qualify the Trans Am for SCCA Trans-Am racing.

The Trans Am's debut at the Chicago Auto Show in early March of 1969 was met with mixed reviews. Purists resented the name and the fact that the car didn't meet the SCCA's engine displacement limit of 305 inches. In fact, *Road and Track* magazine refused to roadtest the car. Most of the other buff books did test it, and in general the Trans Am received good marks in the areas of handling and acceleration.

Under the hood was the standard 400 cubic inch Ram Air III, rated at 335 horsepower. Scoops located near the forward edge of the hood were controlled by the driver; opening the scoops fed cold air to the carburetor via a shroud and plenum arrangement. This same induction system was found on the optional Ram Air IV engine,

pegged at a grossly underrated 345 horsepower — the same engine in the GTO was rated at 370 horses! Standard transmission for the Trans Am was a three-speed manual. Depending on rear axle choice, either a close or wide-ratio Muncie four-speed gearbox was offered, as was a firm-ed-up version of the M40 Turbo Hydra-matic.

The front suspension had coil springs with higher deflection rates, heavier duty shocks and a one-inch stabilizer bar. The rear used special heavy-duty multi-leaf springs. Variable ratio power steering, F70x14 tires on six-inch Rally II wheels and recalibrated, power assisted front disc brakes were also standard.

Interiors were basically unchanged from the rest of the Firebird lineup, however all Trans Ams featured the new Formula steering wheel, available only in black.

Plans to go racing were withdrawn because of the cancellation of the 303 racing engine project (see page 28).



Sales of 1969 Firebirds were poor in general, and the Trans Am sold to only 697 buyers — eight convertibles and 689 hardtops.

The 1969 models were only a holding action until the fabulous 1970 models were introduced in February of 1970. By then, the Trans Am concept had been refined into a serious road car for the driving enthusiast, and the sensational styling of the F-bodies was unlike anything on the road. It was from this futuristic platform that the Trans Am legend would be born.

It can be said that the Trans Am was more of a legitimate performance car than the GTO, not just in acceleration, but as a total package. Engineering had more input into the total design of the car — and it showed. The front air dam and spoilers weren't just for looks; in conjunction with the front fender air extractors, they actually created fifty pounds of downforce at 65 mph. The rear spoiler also contributed downforce that added to the TA's impressive handling credentials.

The Ram Air engine lineup was carried over from 1969, but with a new induction system. Instead of positioning the scoops to the front, the new "shaker" style scoop faced the cowl, gulping in fresh air when the pedal was nailed.

Under the front suspension was the largest stabilizer bar ever placed in a Pontiac, 1.250-inches in diameter, along with high deflection springs and shocks. The rear multi-leaf springs were joined by a .875-inch rear bar and staggered shocks. The body was repositioned back three inches relative to the chassis from the 1969 version, significantly improving weight distribution.

The interior also carried out the new road car image. The flat instrument panel was faced in engine turned applique with a full array of gauges, including a tach that was turned so the red line sat at the twelve o'clock position — a trick used by racers. The driving position was designed to maximize pedal/wheel/shifter position. Along with the 'Vette, it was the best ergonomically executed interior of its time.

For 1971, the drivetrain choices were one and only: the new 455 HO. In an era when big cube engines were receiving less factory emphasis, Pontiac deliberately chose to continue the Trans Am's image as a driver's car, and that meant delivering serious horsepower, even if they did fudge the horsepower figures a tad to downplay the engine's true output.

The 455 HO was a big, gutsy motor



*The 1969 Trans Am received a rear deck airfoil and front fender air extractors (top). Standard engine for the Trans Am was the 400 cube Ram Air III. Both the RA III and optional RA IV air induction system used a shroud, foam and baffle arrangement (above). Cameo White paint was set off by two blue stripes and blue tail lamp panel (below).*



with large chamber heads that utilized the RA IV design round port exhausts, along with improved flow cast iron headers and a 8.4:1 compression ratio. An aluminum intake manifold with cast-iron crossover and large Rochester Quadra-Jet was also carried over from the RA IV. The 455 HO's forte was massive doses of power at low RPMs, thanks to its long stroke design. Listed at an incredibly low 335 horsepower, the 455 HO generated maximum torque of 480 lbs. ft. at 3600 RPM.

Styling was little changed, with the

exception of trim and upholstery revisions and high-back bucket seats. Sales, however, continued to be a disappointment, with production amounting to 2,116 units, or only four percent of the total 1971 Firebird production. Each Trans Am was literally a special order car, as few TAs were assembled as planned sales units.

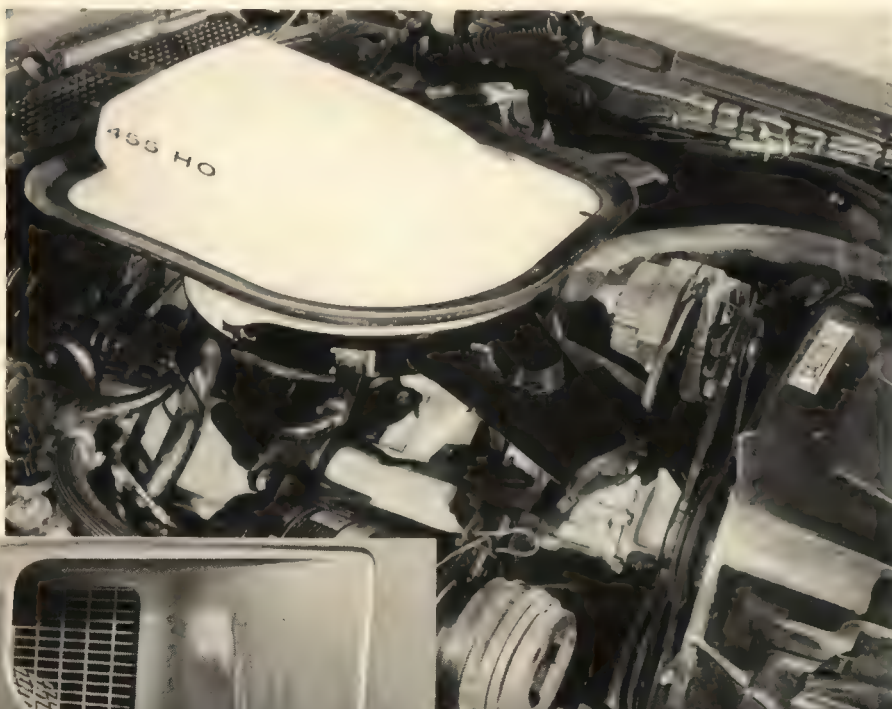
The 1972 Trans Am was markedly unchanged from 1971, however the use of SAE net horsepower figures made the '72 appear less lethal than it actually was, if you can call 305 net

photos by Jerry Heasley





*New sheet metal, suspension changes and aerodynamic body components made the 1970 Trans Am a true road car. The Ram Air engine lineup was unchanged from 1969. Big 455 HO engine came on line with 1971 Trans Am (below).*



*Functional air extractors (top) and air dams at the front of all four wheel openings were part of the Trans Am package.*

horsepower wimpy. Modifications were made to the standard equipment list for '72. Fifteen-inch Rally II wheels on F60x15 billboard tires were standard, as was the Muncie M22 "rock crusher" four-speed gearbox. The Turbo Hydra-matic was available at no extra cost.

As in 1971, only two colors were offered — Cameo White with Blue stripes or Lucerne Blue with White stripes. The Formula wheel, complete instrumentation and fast-ratio power steering was carried over from previous models.

The Corvette's main competitor had a close brush with death in 1972. Because of a UAW strike in April, 1972 at the Norwood assembly plant, all Firebird and Trans Am production came to a twenty-five week halt. It wasn't until September that production began again. However, the 1,100 F-cars that had sat on the assembly line for six months had to be scrapped because they couldn't meet new Federal bumper and safety regulations, and the cost per unit of converting these '72s to meet the 1973 regulations was prohibitive.

This tremendous loss, combined with poor sales and a changing marketplace, prompted GM product planners to consider cancelling the F-car series. Only 1,286 Trans Ams had been built and sold before the strike, and the future of the Trans Am (and the Camaro as well) appeared dark. It was through the considerable efforts of Chevrolet and Pontiac engineers that GM management changed their minds and allowed production of the F-cars to continue.

That made 1973 a make or break year for the Trans Am. Pontiac engineers rolled the dice with a new engine named Super Duty 455 and came up with a winner. The SD 455 (RPO LS2) was so radically different from previous Pontiac engines that it shared almost nothing with them. The block was a special casting, with more webbing in the upper and lower areas. Forged rods, 8.4:1 pistons, high output oil pump and beefed four-bolt main caps were just part of the special bottom end package. Up top, the SD heads featured big valves (2.11-inch intake/1.77-inch exhaust), special seat inserts to prolong valve life and round exhaust ports. A specific intake manifold with longer runners and free-flowing cast-iron headers produced a factory net rating of 310 horsepower at 4000 RPM. Torque peaked at 390 lbs. ft. at 3600 RPM. Unlike other Pontiac 455 engines, the SD 455 could rev over 6000 RPM.

*Continued On Page 26*



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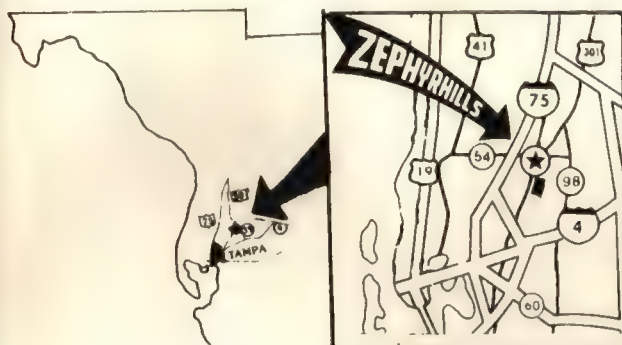


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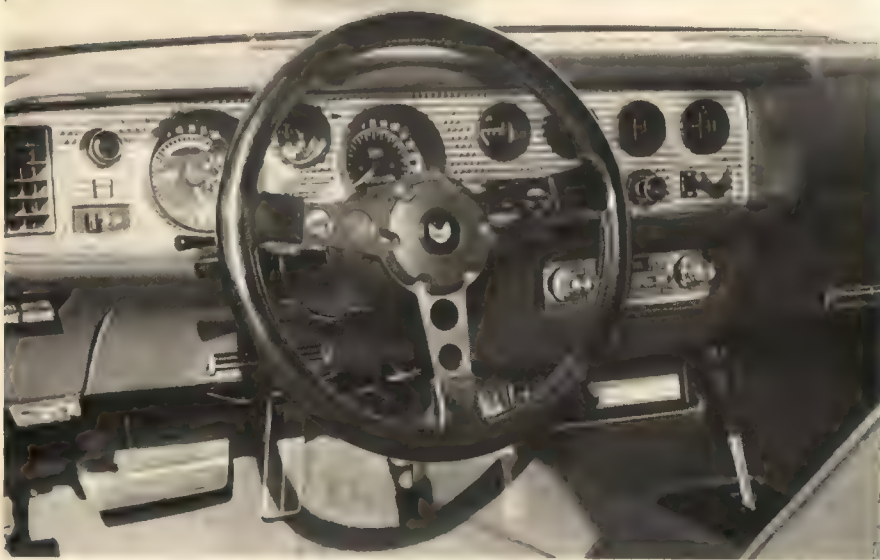
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Formula steering wheel was standard on Trans Am, along with instrumentation and engine-turned dash applique.



"Screaming Chicken" on hood, new grilles and five mph bumper design identifies 1974 Trans Am. SD-455 was rare 1973-1974 engine option.



## WONDER BIRDS

*Continued From Page 24*

Unfortunately, the 455 Super Duty was not released until very late in the 1973 production year. While engineers had succeeded in getting the engine approved and guided it through emissions certification, management had second thoughts about releasing it. Since enough parts had already been produced for quantity assembly, approval was given and 252 orders for the LS2 were filled.

While all the hoopla over the SD 455 was going on, the 1973 Trans Am was improving over the previous year's sales figures. While today most of the attention centers on the SD 455, it was the standard L75 engine that carried the bulk of TA sales (4,550). The L75 was a low revving, 455 cubic inch engine that developed 250 net horses at 4000 RPM.

Overall, few changes were made to the 1973 models. Interior trim, grille inserts, lower valance and the introduction of the large "screaming chicken" graphics on the hood were new for 1973. Thanks to improved sales of the Camaro and the Firebird, the Trans Am was given a reprieve — a decision GM management would congratulate themselves on in later years when the F-cars consistently broke the 100,000 mark in unit sales.

The last year for the true performance Trans Am was 1974, and again, the SD 455 received center stage attention, although it was virtually unchanged from 1973. The standard TA engine was the four-barrel, 225-horse 400, with the 455 cube/250-horse version next and then the SD, rated at a lower 290-horsepower, thanks to an EPA-forced camshaft revision due to irregularities in Pontiac's emission testing procedures.

Exteriors was freshened up, with restyled grilles, front bumper, headlamp bezels and use of the Endura bumper on the rear along with new tail lamp treatments. With the introduction of radial tires, Pontiac finetuned the Trans Am with the new Radial Tuned Suspension. Interior changes were minor, amounting mostly to upholstery and trim.

The Trans Am turned the corner in 1974, selling 10,255 units (total Firebird production exceeded 100,000). By then, the other automakers had given up on the original ponycar market. GM hung in there with the F-cars and the payoff was in sight. The Trans Am mystique had been born, and by 1976 it was outselling the Corvette. DeLorean's dream had come true.

CR



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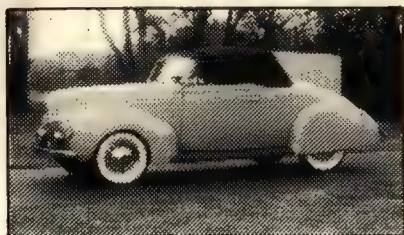
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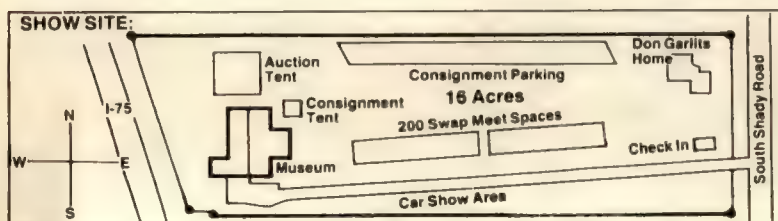


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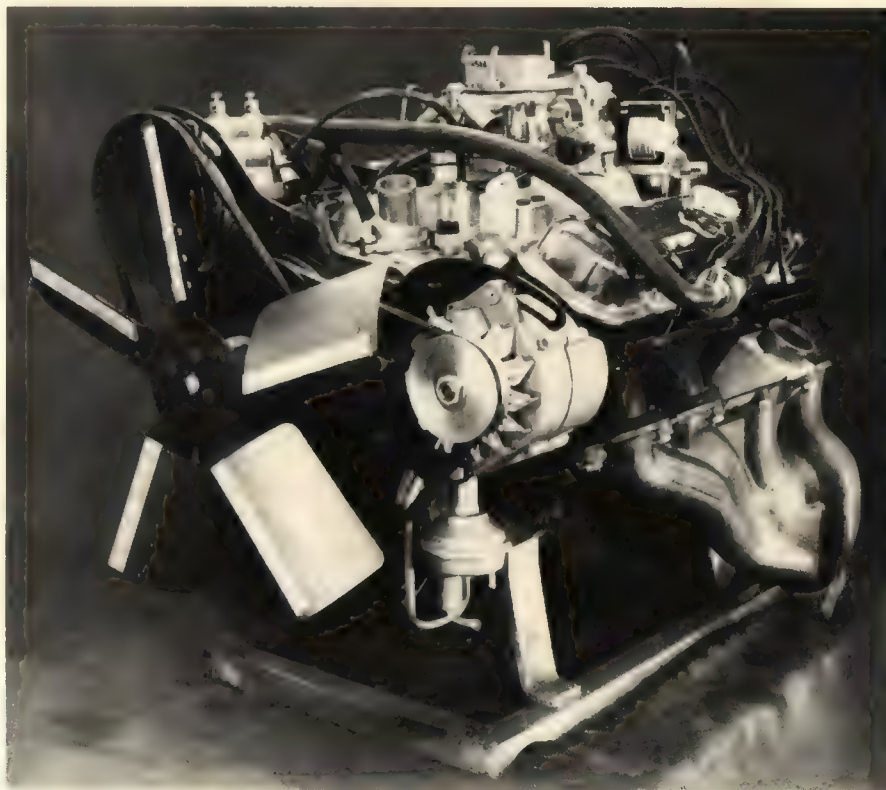
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by Paul Zazarine

**I**n the late sixties, after focusing on the NHRA drag scene and the NASCAR roundy-rounds for nearly ten years, the American automakers discovered a new and exciting arena: the SCCA Trans-Am. Comprised of sport sedans, the Group 2 competition was perfect for ponycars, as Ford had discovered with the Hi-Po 289 in the venerable Mustang.

After Dodge, Plymouth and Chevrolet had all jumped in with varying degrees of factory assistance, Pontiac cast a covetous eye toward getting the Firebird's image in front of the racing crowd. Problem was, the engine displacement limit for Group 2 racing was 305 cubic inches, and Pontiac had no V8 engine smaller than a 350. Destroking the 350 was not the answer either, because it was too underpowered to be competitive in a destroked version. Until Pontiac Engineering could develop a legal engine (both time and dollar consuming), a loophole was needed to get Firebirds into SCCA competition.



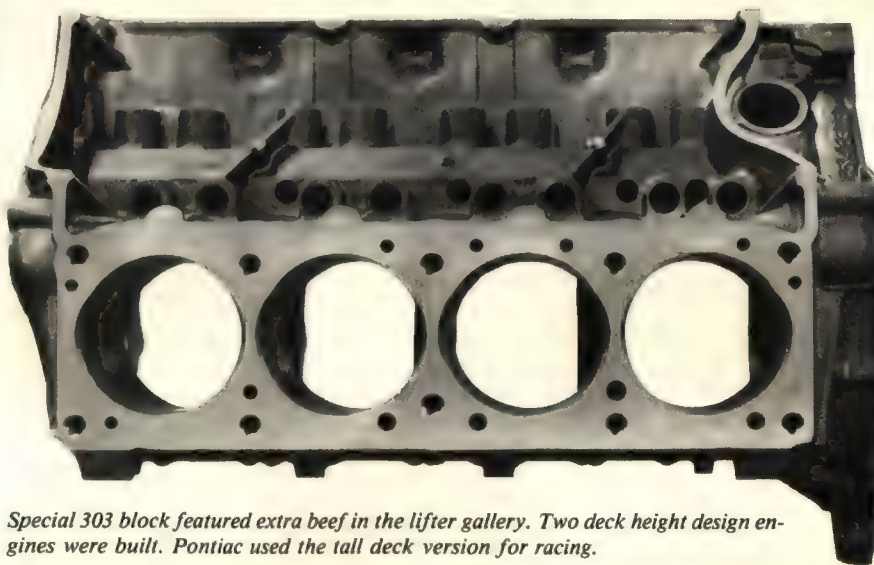
photos by Pontiac Motor Division and Paul Zazarine

## THE 303 EXPRESS

Herb Adams created the perfect Pontiac small-block for the 1969 Trans-Am Firebird, but the 303 never saw production.

The loophole was found in some creative rule-bending and imaginative deception. Canadian Terry Godsall, a Pontiac enthusiast and friend of Pontiac's John DeLorean, somehow convinced SCCA officials that Firebirds sold in Canada used Chevrolet 302 engines. Therefore, Godsall successfully argued, he could legally race a Firebird as long as it was a Canadian Firebird. SCCA officials failed to realize that in 1968 all GM F-bodies (Camaro and Firebird) were produced in United States plants and then shipped to Canada with their division's respective engines. With the wool yanked tight over the SCCA, Godsall lured driver Jerry Titus away from Ford, and Pontiac went racing for the first time since 1963.

Meanwhile, back at the factory, Pontiac engineer Herb Adams, in charge of the Special Projects Group, went to work on a five liter V8 for Trans-Am racing. SCCA rules required 1,000 units to be sold to make the combination race legal, so plans called for the engine to coincide with the introduction of the 1969 Firebird Trans



Special 303 block featured extra beef in the lifter gallery. Two deck height design engines were built. Pontiac used the tall deck version for racing.

Am. But the new small-block racing engine developed slowly, and despite rosy press reports of awesome performance potential, the five liter engine project proved difficult to perfect.

Adams chose to destroke the Pontiac 400 engine to 303 cubes, utilizing a bottom end design that had been developed some years earlier by famed Pontiac engineer Malcolm MacKellar. The head design was borrowed from



Ford's NASCAR "tunnel port," so named because tubes for the pushrods actually ran through the intake ports. Both the 303 racing engine and the Ram Air V shared the tunnel port head design, however the combustion chambers of the Ram Air V measured 67 ccs and the 303 head measured 56 ccs. Along with the heads, the 303 utilized a special forged steel crank, specific forged rods and 12.5:1 forged aluminum pistons. A solid lifter camshaft and short (2.840-inch) stroke promised very high RPM potential.

Actually, two versions of the 303 block were produced, a high deck version and the famous short deck. Twenty-five 303 engines were assembled in the first batch, and Adams remembers a few extras being assembled when needed. According to Adams, the high deck 303 was used in competition.

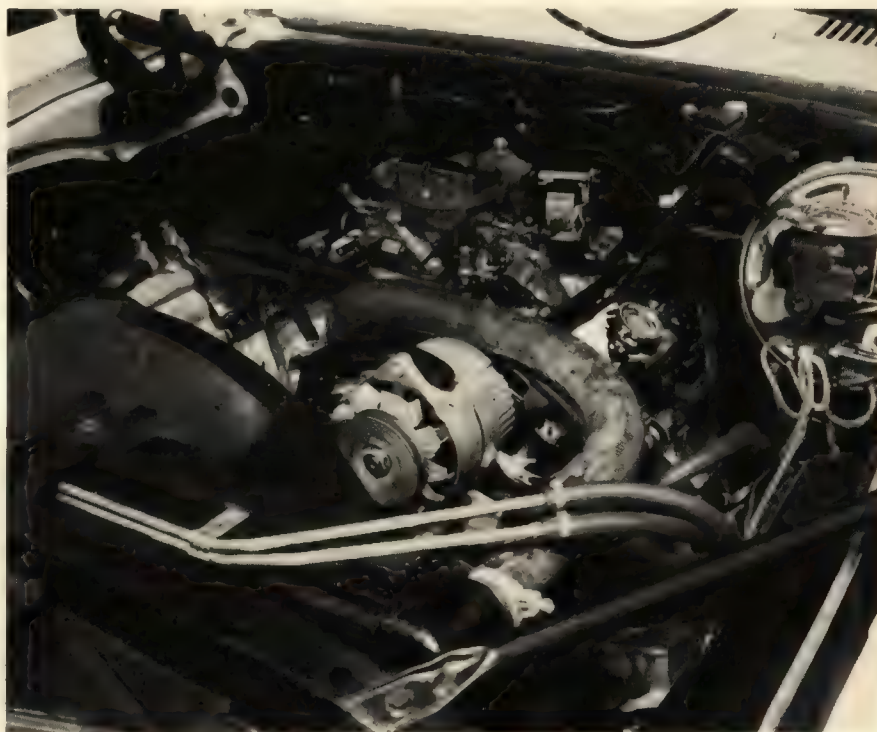
Adams realized that the tunnel port heads flowed too much air for the small stroke 303 engine. To illustrate the size of the ports, consider the intake ports measured 2.150-inches high by 2.6-inches across, and the exhaust ports were 2.025-inches by 1.625-inches wide. On a beefed-up version of the 400, this setup would become the legendary Ram Air V — an engine that never had to live up to its image. But while the RA V was the hardware Pontiac drag racers like Arnie Beswick had been praying for, it was the Ram Air IV cylinder head that proved more effective for use with the 303. Not only were the big port heads a mismatch with the 303, but flow tests indicated that the passage of the pushrod tubes through the intake ports created excessive turbulence.

Other lab experiments with the 303 platform included a cross ram intake with twin Holley carbs, but Adams and Tom Nell found that a single Holley 4546 four-barrel with electric choke on a medium-rise aluminum intake manifold worked best and could produce 485 horsepower at 7000 rpm.

While the 303 project was still healthy, plans were made for production and over-the-counter engines to have cast 10.0:1 pistons. To make the '69 Trans Am Firebird a worthy competitor to the Z/28 on the street, a four-wheel disc brake package was prepared. But when Pontiac's emphasis shifted from covert race engineering to the more corporate priorities of emissions and safety, the 303 Trans Am project was dropped. Performance oriented engineers, like Herb Adams and Tom Nell, had one last shot in 1973-74 with the 455 Super Duty. A considerable amount of lower end design in the SD 455 was the direct



*Tunnel port heads were identical to Ram Air V, but had smaller combustion chambers for use with 303. Pushrod tubes passing through intake ports caused flow turbulence (above). The short stroke engine was more effective with Ram Air Heads. Tunnel port 303 installed in 1969 Trans Am used a special shroud to fit the Holley carburetor. The rest of the Ram Air system was off-the-shelf. Pontiac records show that no 303-equipped 1969 Trans Am was ever sold to the public.*



result of time spent in the 303 racing engine program.

What became of the 303 concept? DeLorean's successor, Pontiac General Manager James MacDonald, stated publicly that the 303 would see production (some of the original McKellar block design did, some ten years later, in the weak-willed 1979-1981 Trans Am 301 engine). Adams believed in the platform, and, with Tom Nell, built his own version of the 303 by destroying a 455 block and adding Ram Air IV heads and a Holley 680 CFM jug on Edelbrock's PB4 aluminum intake. Adams dropped the engine into a gutted 1964 LeMans-cum-GTO dubbed the Gray Ghost and went Trans-Am racing. While the Ghost didn't win any races during the

1971 season, Adams' home grown 303 came close to beating the Bud Moore Mustangs and the factory-backed Penske Javelin driven by Mark Donahue on several occasions.

The Gray Ghost raced under a different owner for over ten years with the same 303 design, winning numerous SCCA races, club championships and the 1977 Mid-Atlantic Road Racing Series A-Sedan title. The performance of the Ghost was proof that the 303 concept could have made Pontiac's Firebird a legitimate Trans-Am car on the track and on the street. Adams and Nell had kept the faith with an engine they believed in, and the 303 became a winner after all.

CR





# RARE BIRD

**F**or performance enthusiasts, 1971 wasn't a fun year. The Feds were writing regulations and restrictions as fast as they could think them up, and since 1970 had sought to put a halt to musclecar advertising. Insurance companies had slapped surcharges of fifty percent and more on performance car policies. Clean air, environmental and safety fanatics strove to ban the automobile entirely. A pale of doubt heavier than a July smog alert hung over Detroit. What was a musclecar freak to do?

If said musclecar freak and Pontiac Special Projects Engineer was named Herb Adams, then the logical solution was the 1971 Firebird 455 HO Trans Am, an anti-establishment car from the word go. The TA had absolutely no redeeming social values except to go like stink and stick to the road like bubble gum on your penny loafers.

In retrospect, how cars like the 1971-72 455HO and the 1973-74 SD 455 Trans Am ever got out the door is a miracle. General Motors was not keen to the idea of a gesture of defiance

against the prospect of heavyhanded government interference. Besides, Pontiac was wading in a backwash of mediocre product planning that hung decals and stripes and sporty names on cars that couldn't get out of their own way. They didn't understand that



performance meant acceleration and handling and the thrill of feeling a car respond. Young lions like Adams did, though. And they weren't intimidated by the forces that sought to pound the musclecar into dust.

Thanks to the young lions, the 1972 455 HO did see the streets, but it is a very rare bird, since only 1,286 were

produced before the UAW strike in April, 1972 shut down the F-car assembly plant in Norwood, Ohio. Of those 1,286 produced, 828 were equipped with the M40 Turbo Hydramatic and 458 came with the M21 close-ratio four-speed manual gearbox.

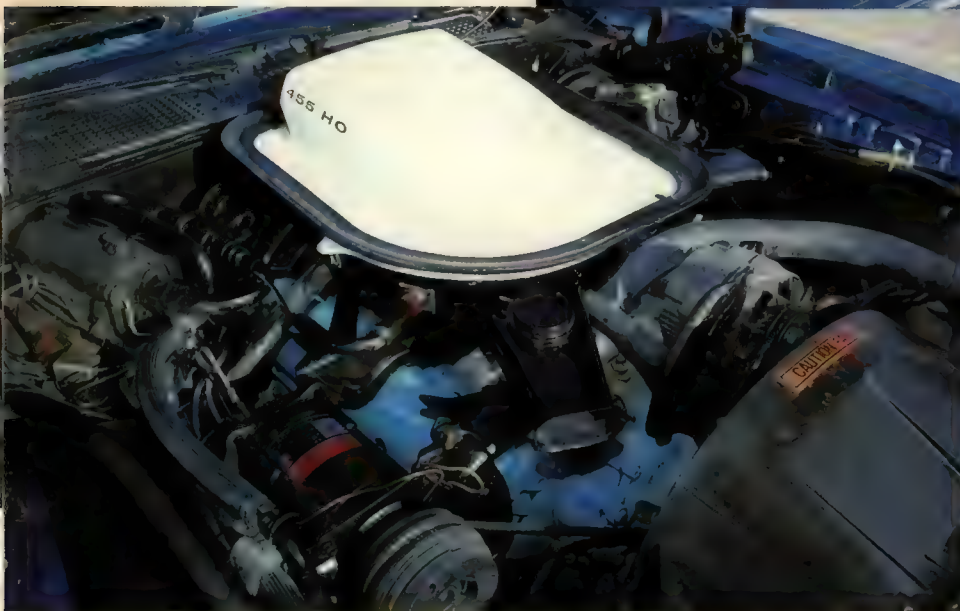
The 455 HO engine was standard equipment on the 1971-72 Trans Ams. It was the culmination of everything Pontiac had learned about engine technology in the previous 15 years. The bottom end design, with four bolt main caps was unchanged from earlier engines. Bore and stroke was also unchanged from earlier 455's, measuring 4.15x4.21.

The camshaft had been around since Tri-Power days, with .425 inches of lift, as had the valve train with 1.5:1 rocker arms. The heads were nearly identical to the Ram Air IV, the main difference being combustion chamber volume (71 ccs for the RA IV compared to the 455 HO's 111). The aluminum intake manifold from the Ram Air IV was reintroduced, saving



about 25 pounds over the cast-iron version. The RA IV/455 HO intake also used a separate, cast-iron crossover to heat the big 800 CFM Rochester Q-Jet. All of this hardware produced a factory SAE net rating of 300 horsepower at 4000 RPM and maximum torque of 415 lbs.-ft. at 3200 RPM.

Only two colors were offered for the 1972 Trans Am, Lucerne Blue and Cameo White. It's estimated that only one out of every four TAs were painted Lucerne Blue. That means less than 210 Trans Ams are equipped like



the '72 belonging to Gary Grillo of Orlando, Florida. Gary has owned his 455 HO since 1976, when he purchased it from the original owner.

Since then, his TA has racked up over 200,000 miles, pausing only for an engine rebuild at 190 thou and a repaint of the original colors in late 1985. Gary's TA also has air conditioning, Deluxe Teal interior, AM/FM Stereo with eight track player, rear window defogger and honeycomb wheels. Gary realizes the rarity of his Trans Am and the statement it made in 1972. He also knows it probably wouldn't be a good idea to drive it to next week's meeting of the Sierra Club. They still don't like Trans Ams.

CR



photos by Paul Zazarine and Donald Farr



# Supercar Profile:



## 1966 OLDSMOBILE L69

by Donald Farr

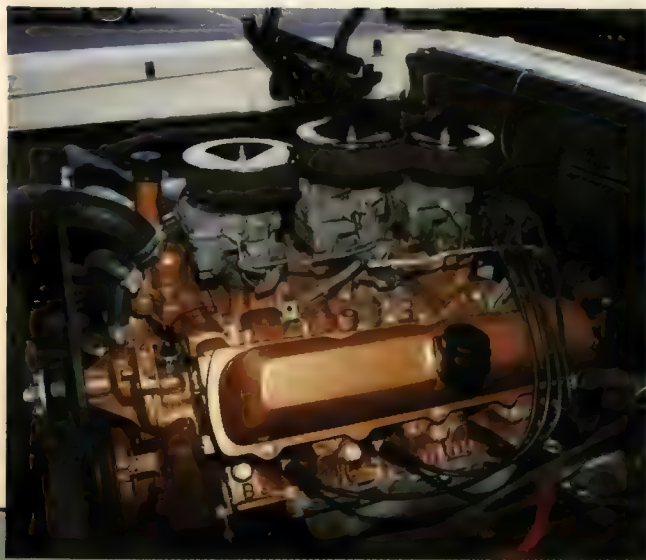
**Q**uite frankly, Oldsmobile was jealous. Strapped by a well-deserved image as a mature automobile for the mature driver, Olds watched almost helplessly as division brother Pontiac scored heavily in the newly discovered youth market with the GTO. Color Oldsmobile green. A late-1964 launch of the 4-4-2 option for the F-85 was the first step in the right direction, but even with 1965's engine

growth to 400 cubic inches, Oldsmobile's 4-4-2 could not overcome the GTO's tremendous youth appeal. In 1965, Pontiac sold 75,352 GTOs; Oldsmobile sold 21,997 4-4-2s. Color Oldsmobile a deeper shade of green.

Much of the GTO mystique, Oldsmobile figured, could be attributed to the GTO's optional tri-power carburetion, even though only a fraction of GTOs were equipped with the three deuces. So on November 24, 1965, Oldsmobile countered with its L69 option — the 4-4-2 Tri-Carb Performance Package. By bolting a trio of Rochester two-barrels onto the 400 engine, the 1966 4-4-2 gained ten advertised horsepower — up to 360, the same as the tri-power GTO — and a bunch of needed performance appeal. Actually, if you stick with the original scheme of naming the 4-4-2, the L69 became the 6-4-2.

On the dealer's order sheet, the L69 replaced the standard 4-4-2's L78 option number, although the L69 was in fact a 4-4-2, with all the standard 4-4-2 goodies, plus the tri-power, which replaced the four-barrel Quadra-Jet. Consisting of the three big-bore Rochester two-barrel carburetors on a cast iron intake manifold, the Oldsmobile tri-power utilized a smooth progressive throttle linkage and three foam-wrapped "maximum-flow" air filters, one for each carburetor. Strangely enough, Oldsmobile failed to promote the L69 tri-power option, and as a result only 2,129 L69 4-4-2s were factory built in 1966, although many tri-power induction units were sold over the counter.

The cast iron L69 intake manifold incorporated a unique heat







#### L69 4-4-2 Production

F-85 Club Coupe	157
F-85 Deluxe Holiday Coupe	178
Cutlass Sports Coupe	383
Cutlass Holiday Coupe	1171
Cutlass convertible	240
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2129</b>

riser block-off provision, obviously for racing purposes. By removing two bolts from the square heat riser plates, one on each side of the manifold near the center carburetor, and rotating the plates 90 degrees, a baffle inside the manifold prevented engine heat from entering the manifold, which provided a cooler and denser air/fuel mixture for improved horsepower. For carburetor preheating during normal street operation, the plates were simply twisted back to the open position.

The intermediate-sized 1966 4-4-2 looks like a big car, especially when compared to the midgets of 1986, but most models, with the exception of the convertible, weighed in at around 3,500 pounds, or about the same weight as most early seventies' V-8 ponycars. With a four-speed (manual transmission was mandatory with the tri-power), the stock L69 4-4-2 could breeze through the standing-start quarter-mile in less than 15 seconds at nearly 100 miles per hour.

For even quicker quarter-mile times, Oldsmobile fabricated the famous W30 option, available only on the L69 4-4-2 in 1966. Consisting of a hotter cam, stiffer valve springs and Force Air induction via a chrome air cleaner, large ducts and plastic scoops mounted in the bumper, the W30 package boosted the tri-power 400's power considerably, which in turn lowered e.t.s into the lower 14s or high 13s. Only 54 W30/L69 4-4-2s emerged from the factory in 1966, most going to drag racers, but many other W30 accessory kits were sold by Oldsmobile dealers. The W30 earned its keep when Loyed Woodland drove his W30-equipped L69 4-4-2 to the 1966 NHRA C/Stock National Championship.

Ron Rowland of Pineville, North Carolina, used to race Oldsmobiles, so he knew he'd found a rare breed when he found



photos by Donald Farr



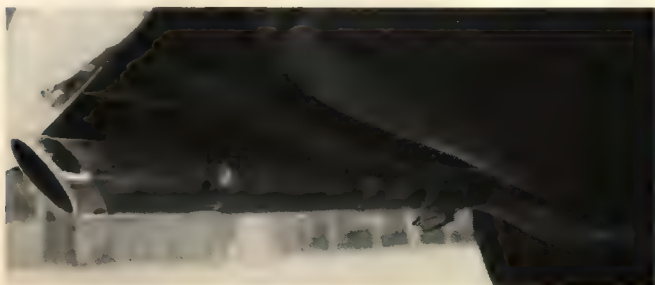
# Supercar Profile:



his 1966 L69 4-4-2, a Cutlass Holiday Coupe model that showed signs of former race competition, including holes in the inner fenders for someone's previously installed fenderwell headers. Everything was there, says Ron, plus five layers of old paint, so Ron stripped the 4-4-2 to bare metal and began a long and laborious restoration. Performing all the work himself with the exception of the paint, Ron converted the 42,000-mile 4-4-2 into an all-out show car. So far, the white 4-4-2 has won first place awards in five shows, including the top trophy in the Oldsmobile class at *Car Review's* 1985 Musclegar Nationals. Almost every option on the car, except the AM radio, is performance oriented: four-speed transmission, 3.90:1 posi-traction gears, side-mount tachometer (attached to the driver's side of the instrument panel) and Super Stock 1 wheels. Ron plans to add the W30 pieces in the near future.

Color Oldsmobile green — because they can't make them like this anymore.

CR



## 1966 Oldsmobile 4-4-2 L69

### DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	115
Overall length	204.2
Overall width	75.4
Height	53.6
Front track	58
Rear track	58
Curb weight	3620
Passenger capacity	5

### SUSPENSION

Front suspension	Independent ball joint, coil springs, 0.937 link-type stabilizer bar
Rear suspension	Live axle; two upper and two lower control arms, coil springs, anti-roll bar
Steering	Recirculating ball gear
Brakes	Front and rear drum
Tire size	7.75x14

### ENGINE

Type	V-8, ohv
Bore and Stroke	4.00x3.975
Displacement	400 cubic inches
Compression ratio	10.25:1
Horsepower @ rpm	360 @ 5000
Torque @ rpm	440 @ 3600
Carburetion	Rochester 3x2
Valve train	Hydraulic lifters, 1.995-inch intake and 1.62-inch exhaust valves, 286/286 duration and .431/.433 lift cam
Exhaust	Dual reverse flow mufflers

### DRIVETRAIN

Transmission	Four-speed manual
Gear ratios	4th - 1.00:1 3rd - 1.46:1 2nd - 1.88:1 1st - 2.52:1
Axle ratio	3.55:1

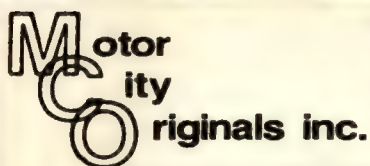
### PERFORMANCE\*

0 - 40	3.4 seconds
0 - 60	6.3 seconds
0 - 100	15.8 seconds
Quarter-mile	14.8 @ 97 mph
Top speed	121 @ 5600 rpm

\*Performance figures taken from August 1966 *Car Life*.



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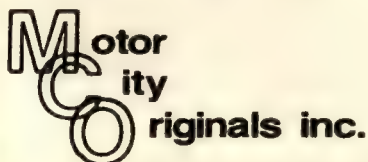
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**I**f the musclecar was a dying species by 1971, somebody forgot to tell the folks at Plymouth. Their redesigned '71 Road Runner had center stage all to itself, while GM and Ford were pulling the plug on high performance. But new sheet metal wasn't all that Plymouth had bragging rights to in 1971. Their fearsome 440 cubic inch engine was optional in the Road Runner, along with the cartooned Air Grabber hood scoop that was driver controlled to ram cool air into the three hungry Holley two barrel carbs. At 385 horsepower, the 440 six shooter



## RUNNER WITH THE PACK



road runner



# RUNNER WITH THE PACK

worked well with the TorqueFlite automatic transmission and 4.10:1 Dana rear axle. This combination netted *Car Craft* a quarter-mile best of 13.71 at 101.46 bone stock.

Interiors were vastly improved over the first generation Road Runners, with excellent instrumentation, comfortable seats and enough options to keep the most ardent boulevard cruiser happy for years. Bright colors like "Curious Yellow" or "Sassy Grass Green," along with a bold strobe stripe that ran across the C pillars and top made the 1971 Road Runner as visually stimulating as it was hairy.

CR

photos by Donald Farr



# Fast Tracks



## NOT JUST ANOTHER CAMARO

**O**pen the dictionary and look up the word fast. Mr. Webster offers seven definitions. We submit an eighth: Yenko SC 427 Camaro. These special Z/28s were factory fitted with the 450 horsepower, 427 cubic inch L72 engine. Don Yenko, a Chevy dealer in Canonburg, Pennsylvania, ordered up a batch of the famous iron COPO Camaros to customize and sell along with his Stinger Corvairs, LT1 Nova SS and big block Chevelles.

The L78 engine, available as Central Office Production Order 9561, was rated by Chevrolet at 425 hp, but Yenko chose to use the NHRA rating of 450. Yenko saw little reason to modify the L72, since it utilized a big Holley 800 CFM carburetor, aluminum high rise intake and big port cast-iron heads.



photos by Chuck Green

The .520 lift solid lifter cam, forged 11:1 pistons, forged rods and Tuftrided crank were all factory installed in the four-bolt main iron block. Either an M21 close-ratio four-speed manual transmission or the M40 Turbo Hydra-matic was offered, tied to a heavy-duty 4.10 Posi rear.

Each car had special Yenko striping, graphics and exterior badges. Inside, a factory-installed 140 mph speedometer and Stewart Warner gauges mounted under the dash were standard. On the headrests was the Yenko sYc logo, which stood for Yenko Super Car. The 36,000 mile Daytona Yellow Yenko shown here belongs to Rich Von Kanel, a high school teacher from Louisville, Ohio. Rich has owned his Yenko for almost two years, and drives it every few weeks in sunny weather.

CR



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by Donald Farr

**B**rent Hajek called last summer. He'd heard that we were coming to Tulsa to attend the Shelby meet there, and he wanted to know if we would be interested in photographing his collection of cars. Our ears perked when he mentioned Dyno Don Nicholson's 1964 A/FX Comet. Then he proceeded to tell us about the 1965 A/FX Mustang, the 1965 fiberglass A/FX Falcon, the ex-Barrie Poole Thunderbolt and the 1964 lightweight Galaxie. Three of the cars would be running exhibition passes at Tulsa International during the Shelby event. Were we interested?

Does Carroll Shelby like chili?

Hajek's passion for Ford products goes back to the mid-seventies when he and wife Terrie began showing Boss Mustangs at Mustang and Shelby meets. Then he bought "Big Red," a lightweight 427 Galaxie that had been built for exhibition drag racing by Phil Fair and John Vermeersch, who currently fields tech questions as Ford Motorsport's "Answer Man." The spectator interest generated by the lightweight sparked the Hajeks' interest in Ford factory race cars, and before long Brent and Terrie found themselves in pursuit of one of the best vintage race car collections in the country. The black Thunderbolt was added to the stable in 1983, then, with other Ford fanatics guiding them to stashes of FoMoCo history, they bought the Nicholson Comet, then the Falcon and lastly, but not finally, the Mustang. Since summer, the Hajeks have inducted two more A/FX Mustangs into their Factory Ford Hall of Fame — the 1965 "Jersey Rattler" and the ex-Gas Ronda 1966 long-nose car.

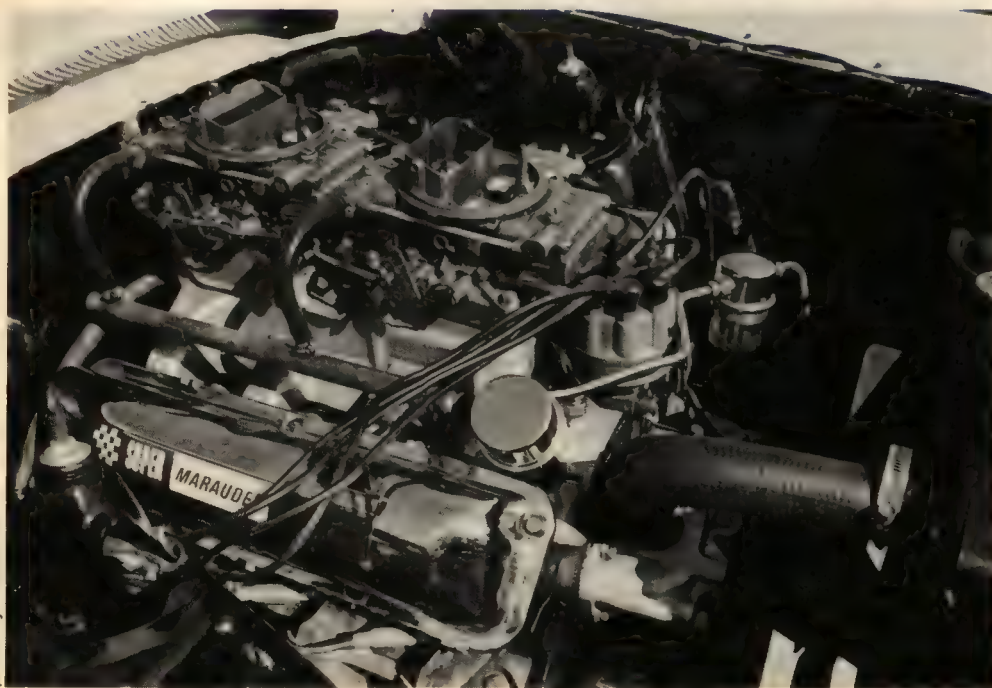
Of all the famous Fords in the Hajek collection, the ex-Don Nicholson A/FX Comet jolts more memories than the others. A former NHRA World Record holder, the white Mercury, with its huge scoops poking out menacingly in front, was a familiar sight on America's drag strips and on magazine covers during the 1964 racing season. Nicholson replaced the Comet in 1965 with his SOHC Cyclone, and the Comet passed through the Fenton-Jordan racing team for a season and then headed to a life of bracket racing.

Following leads from fellow Performance Ford Club of America members, the Hajeks traced down the Comet until they found it, neglected for over a decade, in Maryland. Initially unsure of the car's true lineage, the Hajeks became believers when the owner produced the original Statement of Origin papers, dated April 8, 1964, with Nicholson listed as the "Distributor, Dealer, etc." The serial number — 4H23-551846 (no engine code) — matched the car, and the statement "Not for use on public highways" was prominently displayed.

Once transported to its new home in Ames, Oklahoma, the Comet underwent a thorough restoration. Aided by old photographs, obtained from Nicholson and old magazines, the Hajeks painstakingly reconstructed the old warrior to its 1964 condition, including 200 hours of hand-painted lettering by Terrie. One of the three "factory-backed" Comets (between 15 and 20 were built by Dearborn Steel Tubing), the Nicholson/Hajek car re-

## RACING INTO THE PAST

The "Going Thing" in Oklahoma is Brent and Terrie Hajek's collection of factory Ford race cars.



photos by Donald Farr







ceived fiberglass doors, as opposed to the acid-dipped steel doors on the other cars, plus fiberglass front fenders, hood, bumper and trunk deck. The Howards wheels are similar to those run at one time by Nicholson, although several other brands were utilized in 1964. The engine, like the original, is a 427 high-riser, backed by a toploader four-speed and 5.43:1 gears within the narrowed rear end housing. Brent has gone 10.60 at 129 miles per hour in the Comet. The quickest time recorded by Dyno Don in 1964 was 10.56.

The A/FX Falcon has an unusual history. Originally built as the fiberglass "buck" for the 1965 Falcon styling approval, the all-glass Falcon was eventually given to racer Dave Lyall, a then-Ford employee, who sent the buck to Dearborn Steel Tubing for construction into Falcon drag car 1001-1. For strength, DST replaced the roof, floor pan and cowl with metal, but otherwise the car sports its original fiberglass body. Originally powered by a Single Overhead Cam 427, Lyall campaigned the Poppy Red A/FX Falcon to three NHRA Ultra-Stock titles and a quickest elapsed time of 9.80. During the restoration, Hajek opted for a 427 low-riser instead of an ultra-expensive SOHC, but still manages to turn times of 10.55 at 128 mph.

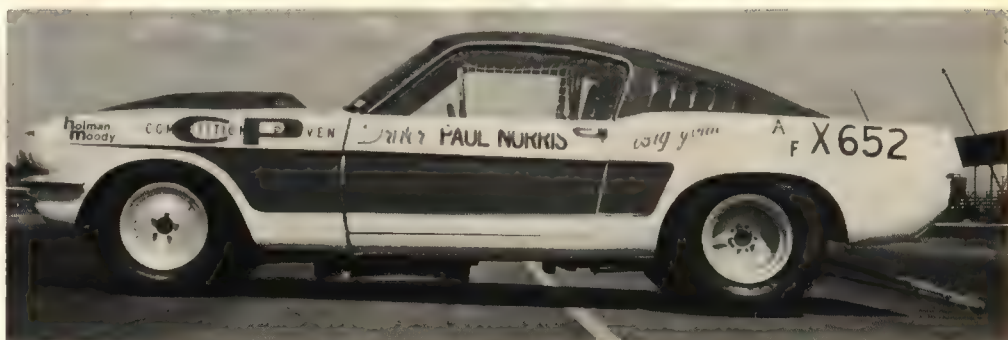
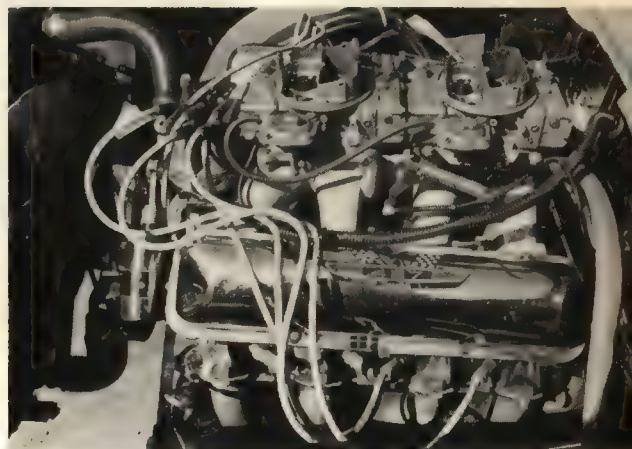
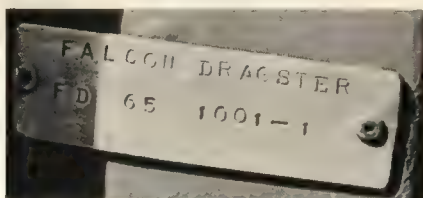
According to information unearthed by the Hajeks, it is believed that Holman-Moody converted only ten 1965 Mustang fastbacks into A/FX race cars, a process that moved the wheel openings forward some three inches and replaced the front fender, door, hood, bumper and rear deck sheet metal with lightweight fiberglass. The Hajek A/FXer was Holman-Moody's test car, driven by Paul Norris and originally powered by an SOHC 427. Today, the Mustang runs a 514 cubic inch, Jack Roush-built 460, a C6 automatic and 4.86:1 gears, along with non-1965 Moroso aluminum wheels, and is set up to compete in NHRA Super Gas with a 9.90 index. To Hajek's knowledge, only three A/FX Mustangs exist today.

The 1964 Thunderbolt, reconstructed in the seventies by racer Barrie Poole to NHRA SS/C specs, is modernized somewhat with Cragar Super Trick wheels, a Doug Nash five-speed and updated speed equipment on the 427 high-riser motor. Although the pitch black beauty is one of the best detailed T-bolts in the country, Hajek still takes it for 10.45 @ 128 mph spins down the quarter-mile.

With the exception of the Thunderbolt, the Hajeks' factory Fords are not show cars. They are not spit-polished or Armor-all'd or glossy beyond belief. But nor were they in 1964-65. They are race cars, and they are treated as such. Isn't it better to see an A/FX Ford on the drag strip than on the show circuit? Last year, the Hajeks match raced the Nicholson Comet and the Falcon, Brent driving the Merc and Terrie in the Ford, at various Ford and Shelby meets. This year, after they finish the Gas Ronda Mustang restoration, look for the Paul Norris A/FX Mustang against the Ronda "long-nose" Mustang. If the NHRA puts together an Exhibition Class, as rumored, the Hajeks will be among the first to compete with their fast collection of factory Fords. **CR**



*Last year, Terrie drove the ex-Dave Lyall Falcon during Hajeks' husband vs. wife, Comet vs. Falcon match races. Terrie knows how to drag race, as evidenced by this burn-out. The fiberglass-bodied Falcon surrounds a 427 low-riser motor (right). The car's VIN, 1001-1, is stamped on a metal tag (below) marked "Falcon Dragster."*



*Profile view of the Holman-Moody A/FX Mustang shows the forward placement of the front wheel openings.*



*Although the black and gold '64 Thunderbolt is practically a detailed-out show car, Brent is not timid about running the high-riser 427-powered Ford down the quarter-mile. The car has run 10.45 at 128 mph.*



# Supercar Showdown '86



Last year was great. This year will be even greater. With *Car Review's* sponsorship and Chuck Green's Showdown experience, the 1986 Supercar Showdown is shaping up as the musclecar event of the year. As of December 1985, a full six months prior to the June 20-21 Showdown at Quaker City Dragstrip in Salem, Ohio, over 60 hard-hitting musclecars were entered, including hardcore models like a '69 ZL1 427 Camaro, a '70 W-30 4-4-2, a '71 Six-Pack 440 'Cuda, a '63 Galaxie 427, a '70 Ram Air IV GTO, a '70 Torino 429 SCJ, a number of 455 Buicks (Stage 1s included), several big-block Corvettes, a bunch of muscle Mustangs and more Hemi Mopars than you can shake a Buick at. By the time the entry deadline rolls around on May 31st, all 256 Supercar Showdown positions could be filled.

To enter an original and stock musclecar in the '86 Supercar Showdown, contact Chuck Green (1051 W. Riddle Ave., Ravenna, OH 44266, (216-297-7810) and request an official entry form. Pre-registration is \$20.

In addition to the Supercar Showdown, which pits stock and original musclecars against each other in heads-up quarter-mile competition, this year's event will also incorporate a Gambler's Race for modified vehicles and all-out race cars. Minimum dial-in for this bracket event is 13.99, so look for some quick times. Entry fee for Gambler Racers is \$15 (\$5 for registration and \$10 toward the Gambler's Race), so the total purse could reach \$800 — \$640 from the participants' pot plus another \$160 thrown in by Chuck Green. The winner gets \$400, second place receives \$200 and the pair of semi-finalists get \$100 each. No round money will be paid. Gambler cars must meet NHRA safety requirements, and helmets are required (Snell 80 rating recommended).

So far, two exhibition match races are scheduled during the Supercar Showdown. The first race pits Frank Spittle's '63 Dodge Ramcharger against Lamar Walden's '62 Biscayne 409. The second features Larry Short's '64 Ford Thunderbolt against John Brown's '68 factory race Hemi 'Cuda. Should be just like the old Super/Stock days. We're looking for more factory lightweights to run match race exhibitions.

Cam 2 Racing Gas, at a spine-tingling 106 octane, will be available at the Quaker City track for all Supercar Showdown, Gamblers and exhibition cars.

Hotel headquarters for Supercar Showdown registrants is the Kent, Ohio, Holiday Inn (216-678-0101), located at I-76 and Route 43. Additional lodging is available across the street at the Knights Inn (216-678-5250).

Unlike most car shows, the Supercar Showdown shows you original musclecars in heads-up quarter-mile competition, just like in the sixties. But because the winner may be the best driver and not necessarily the fastest car, we'll also award a trophy to the supercar with the quickest elapsed time. Will it be the Hemi or the Stage 1, or neither? Be there and see.

## SUPERCAR SHOWDOWN SCHEDULE

- Thursday, June 19**  
 All day: Check in at Holiday Inn, Room 116
- Friday, June 20**  
 8 a.m.-noon: Check in at Holiday Inn, Room 116  
 12:30 p.m.: Leave Holiday Inn for trip to Quaker City track; arrive 1:30  
 2-4:30 p.m.: Photo session at drag strip  
 4:30 p.m.: Inspection of Supercar Showdown cars for legality and safety  
 6:30 p.m.: Driver's meeting at drag strip  
 7:40 p.m.: Return to Holiday Inn
- Saturday, June 21**  
 8 a.m.: Leave Holiday Inn for trip to Quaker City track; arrive 9 a.m.  
 9:15-11 a.m.: Car inspection continues. Supercar Showdown eliminations will begin as soon as inspections are completed

## RULES FOR SUPERCAR SHOWDOWN COMPETITORS

- All Supercar Showdown cars must have been built on an American assembly line.
- Must have original carburetor, intake manifold and exhaust manifolds.
- No aftermarket cams, torque converters, nitrous oxide or fiberglass body parts.
- Any D.O.T. approved tire and rim combination allowed (no slicks).
- All cars must run mufflers and tailpipes.
- Battery must be in stock location.
- Any ignition system is allowed.
- Any air cleaner assembly is allowed, except no homemade Ram Air.
- Aftermarket gauges are acceptable.
- Electric fuel pumps and cool cans are allowed.
- Any type shocks and springs are acceptable, but they must be installed in the stock location.
- Traction bars or equivalent are allowed, but subframe connectors are not.
- All cars must have all lug nuts, seat belt for the driver, radiator overflow catch can and battery tie-down. Driver must wear helmet (Snell 80 rating recommended if car runs faster than 13.99).
- There will be a 15 cubic inch limit over advertised engine displacement. It will be checked.



# Kowalski's Last Ride

Behind the scenes  
of the movie  
*Vanishing Point*.

by Paul Zazarine

**F**or movie goers who are also autobuffs, a few "road movies" stand out as a cut above the standard box office fare. Perhaps the best known of these is the critical and box office hit *Bullitt*. While the *Bullitt* plot was a little thin, it did have Steve McQueen and that exciting chase sequence through San Francisco. Equally as popular today is the 1971 cult classic, *Vanishing Point*.

*Vanishing Point* was more than just a chase movie, although at the time of release the message it carried beneath the explosive photography and fast paced music wasn't fully appreciated. Over the years it has remained in the minds of movie goers who just happen to also be in love with high performance cars. *Vanishing Point* had a subconscious effect on the viewer; its impact remained long after seeing it.

Fifteen years after its release, many are still intrigued about the stars, the plot and, of course, the cars. Over the

years, numerous myths have developed concerning *Vanishing Point*. Ever since we ran a *Vanishing Point* trivia question in the March, 1984 issue of *Car Review*, we've received scads of letters and phone calls relating contradictory details about the movie and the cars. What began as a passing trivia question soon turned into a tidal wave of *Vanishing Point* mania.

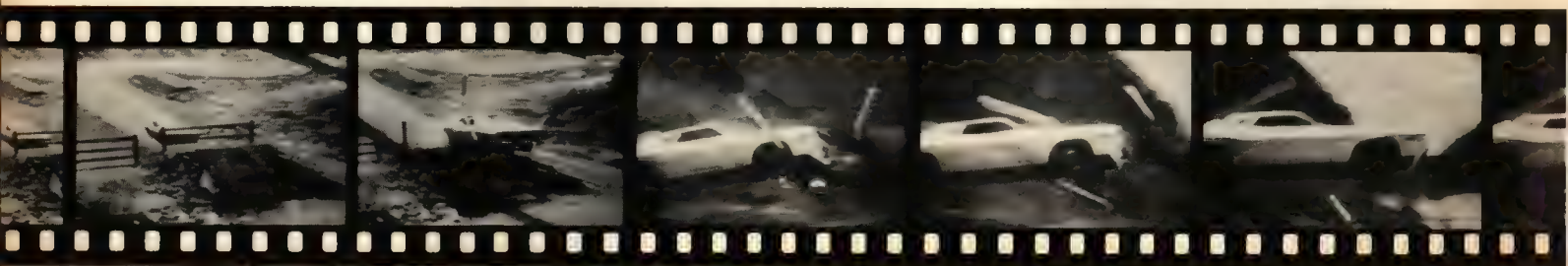
We had really touched a nerve, so to put the capper on a lot of wrong information, we talked to some *Vanishing Point* experts. That only proved to cloud the story even more. So we cranked up the Watts line,

assured the boss it was for a worthy cause, and proceeded to call Hollywood. We arranged two interviews, one with *Vanishing Point* stunt coordinator Carey Loftin; the other with Barry Newman, who starred in the role of Kowalski. What we learned from them reinforced some stories while other myths crashed and burned.

Carey Loftin has coordinated and performed stunts in numerous movies including *On The Beach*, *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad World* and *Grand Prix*. Many will remember the exciting street race sequence in the recent film,



photos by 20th Century Fox, Robert Hilpi and Paul Zazarine





*Against All Odds*, which won Loftin an Academy Award. Newman has high praise for Loftin. "Carey is the greatest stunt driver that ever lived. I did a few of the minor stunts, but Carey set up and did the major ones. He really set them up beautifully and made me look great!" Loftin is currently working on a car chase sequence on the elevated railways of Chicago for *Running Scared*.

One of the main points of controversy has centered around the 1970 Dodge Challengers used in *Vanishing Point*. Carey Loftin remembers that he specifically requested Challengers because of the "quality of the torsion bar suspension and for its horsepower. It was a real sturdy, good running car." Five Alpine White Challengers were loaned to Cupid Productions by Chrysler for

Newman remembers that the Challengers were wrenched for the movie by Max Balchowsky, who also prepared the Mustangs and Chargers for *Bullitt*. "Max was like a surgeon. It was amazing. He would take parts out of one to make another car work, because we really ruined a couple of those cars, what with jumping ramps from highway to highway and over creeks."

Newman agreed with Loftin's memory about the cars. "I remember the cars had 440 engines and had a tremendous amount of power. It was almost as if there was too much power for the body. You'd put it in first and it would almost

rear back! They had a four-speed, and there was also an automatic car. That was a 383. I think we used that one as the camera car on the straight runs."

One difference between the filming of *Bullitt* and *Vanishing Point* was speed — or the appearance of speed. As the Mustang and Charger sped through the streets of San Francisco, they were moving at actual speed. For *Vanishing Point*, the cameras were *undercranked*. Consequently, as Loftin explains, "the top speed at the most

promotional consideration and were returned upon completion of the filming.

How the cars were equipped has been a point of controversy among *Vanishing Point* buffs. "There were five cars," Loftin said. "The number five car that we never used was an automatic and it did have the 383. All the rest had the 440. All the 440s were equipped with four-speeds, and all were four-barrel motors." Speculation had been that Hemi or Six Pack Challengers were used, which Loftin and Newman dispelled. The cars performed to Loftin's satisfaction, although dust came to be a real problem. None of the engines were blown, and Loftin recalls that no special equipment was added or modifications made to the cars, except for heavier-duty shocks for the car that jumped over No Name creek. No special bracing or frame ties were used in any of the Challengers.



Barry Newman.

### ***Vanishing Point* — The Movie**

*Vanishing Point* is based upon two true events. The story centers around a car delivery driver ferrying a 1970 Dodge Challenger from Denver to San Francisco. He's made a bet that he can make the trip in 18 hours. The driver, who's name is Kowalski, has a number of encounters with the police who try to stop him. His cross country trek snowballs into a massive police hunt that attracts the attention of the national media. The *Vanish-*

*ing Point* story line was inspired by a young California driver who refused to stop and died after crashing into a police roadblock.

Through a series of flashbacks, we learn that Kowalski was a Vietnam veteran with a Medal of Honor. His girlfriend had drowned, his careers as a police officer, a motorcyclist and as a stock car driver had all ended in failures. The Kowalski character was loosely based on the shattered career of a San Diego police officer.

Few understood the existentialist message in *Vanishing Point*, however there is much more than just 90 minutes of chase scenes. The dramatic final scene in which Kowalski vaporizes the Challenger and himself into the two bulldozer blades was not because he had given up on life. He's smiling at the end of *Vanishing Point*, as he rushes toward the center of light between the blades, because he thinks he can make it.

Barry Newman told us he is currently negotiating for the rights to *Vanishing Point*. There is a good possibility we may yet learn what happened to Kowalski, because Newman has plans to make *Vanishing Point II*.



was between 100 and 110 miles-per-hour. We had a fairly low rear end ratio, and to get the appearance of speed, we would undercrank the camera. When people are walking, it can look really crazy, but out in the desert, it looks like the car is really flying. For example, on the scenes with the Jaguar, we cranked the camera at half speed. The cars were going about 50 miles-per-hour, but at regular camera speed, it would appear to be much faster."

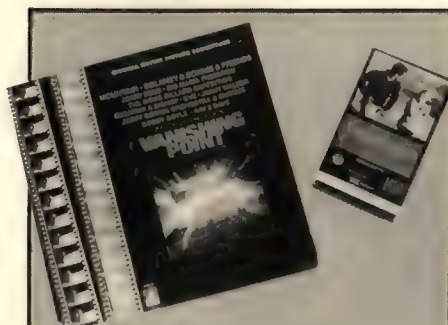
For the high speed desert scenes, Newman remembers traveling a little slower. "It was more like 80-90," said Newman. "What happens is if you shoot a car from the side, you can go by at 30 miles-per-hour and it looks like you're traveling at 100. If you shoot from the front of the car going down the road, you can be traveling at 100 miles-per-hour, but it looks like you're doing 20. The perspective is off. So those shots where I look like I'm traveling at 150, we weren't going that fast at all."

We asked Loftin how well Barry Newman drove the Challenger during the filming. "He caught on so fast I couldn't believe it," Loftin laughed. "I'll tell you one thing Barry did. The scene before the crash at the end where he comes up and does a 180 on the road and goes back, he did that himself. The director didn't realize that. I was standing behind the cameraman, and when Barry did the stunt, I said 'he's a good listener and learner.' Serafian thought it was me. I told him Newman had to do *something!* Barry did a terrific job."

Driving across the desert was not all fun and games, as Newman relates. "We had tremendous traffic control, although once I almost did get in trouble. They blocked off five miles of road to keep traffic away while we made the shots. One of the Challengers was used as a camera car. That particular Challenger was set up with three cameras. One was mounted on the hood looking into the windshield and looking at the driver. Another camera was hooked onto the front bumper and it looked ahead of the car at the white lines. A third camera was on the rear bumper. The camera car also had a tremendous amount of lights on it. The lights were extremely

bright, and it's difficult to see, especially with that Colorado sun shining in your eyes. Somehow, while I was driving on this controlled five mile strip of road, a car got through the traffic blocks, and I was on the road by myself, and suddenly, I happen to see a car coming at me! I just swerved off to the right and went up a hill. A couple of the cameras fell off, but we were alright. It was a close call."

Special preparations were made for



### Vanishing Point Collectables

Among *Vanishing Point* fans, and there are a lot of them, a highly prized possession is the 99 minute videotape of the film, which, interestingly enough, has Charlotte Rampling's name on the label, although she doesn't appear in the movie. It can be purchased from your local video dealer or through Magnetic Video Corporation, 23434 Industrial Park Court, Farmington Hills, MI 48024. The catalog number is 1028, and the suggested retail price is \$59.95.

The Holy Grail for *Vanishing Point* fans is the original soundtrack album, released on the Amos label and distributed by Bell records, a division of Columbia Pictures. Its catalog number is AAS8002. It is no longer in the catalog, however you may run across a copy in used record stores or swap meets. The music used for the soundtrack features Delaney & Bonnie & Friends (one of whom is Rita Coolidge), Jerry Reed, Kim Carnes and a number of unknown artists. The cover artwork shows a white 1971 Challenger with New York plates. Inside and on the back are stills taken from the movie.

the spectacular crash at the end of the movie, as Kowalski speeds into the bulldozers placed across the road with blades down to stop him. Several days were needed to set up the stunt. A derelict 1967 Camaro was purchased and stripped of engine and transmission. A tow-rig setup that Loftin had used successfully in the past was employed. "I've used this rig for a long time, Loftin explained. "And as long as you're towing it, it will go to that fulcrum. There was a crown on the road, and I had a mechanic there. I would tow the Camaro, and he'd reset the front end. We did this several times until the car would tow right in the center of the road."

"I had a quarter mile of cable when we did the stunt. The strip of road leading to the bulldozers went straight back, over a slight hill and then to the left. When I started to tow, I couldn't see the Camaro, so I told the effects man to put it in the ditch on the left hand side so it will be in a straight line. After all the testing I just had to believe that it would work. Once I got it up to speed, it came straight down the road. I was doing a good 80 miles-per-hour at the time of impact."

"With the motor and transmission out, we were prepared for the car to go end over end, but it stuck into the bulldozers, which was a better effect. The effects man loaded the Camaro's front-end with explosives to go off on impact, and if I had lost control and gone into the ditch and really hit something hard, it would have exploded there. The director set the bulldozers about five to six inches apart, just enough to get my cable through. He asked me what the point of no return was, and I said 'about two seconds after you say 'action.' Once I go it's all the way. I don't have anything to stop the Camaro except those bulldozers!'"

"We towed the Camaro with the fifth car, the 383 automatic. I used that one because if you miss a gear and your line goes slack you lose the car. I'd rather use an automatic than risk a chance of losing the car. That 383 was a good running car. In fact, it would probably run just as fast as that 440."

What happened to *Vanishing Point* after it was filmed is as interesting as the making of the movie itself.







Newman recounts that a portion of *Vanishing Point* was cut, shortening the film from 107 to 99 minutes. "There was a wonderful scene where Kowalski stops the car and picks up a hitchhiker, played by Charlotte Rampling. The girl, dressed in black and shrouded in fog, is carrying a sign that says *San Francisco*. He picks her up, she gets into the car and she asks him, 'What are you?' He answers, 'a car delivery driver.' " She says, 'No, what sign are you?' They talk and end up spending the night together in the desert. Suddenly she says, 'Don't go to San Francisco,' and vanishes. She was the symbol of death.

"That was an interesting scene, because it really gave the film an allegorical lift and explains everything. I was in Austria filming *The Salzburg Connection* while they were editing *Vanishing Point*, and I received a call from my agent in New York. He had just seen a screening of *Vanishing Point* and said they cut it up and made it look like a "B" movie. They cut out the Rampling scenes because they were afraid the audience wouldn't understand what happened to the girl in the car; why was she suddenly not there? That was their explanation.

In its final form, *Vanishing Point* bears little resemblance to the Guillermo Cain screenplay, which was loosely based on two real life events. The movie was released without the Rampling scenes, and the 107 minute version was never shown. *Vanishing Point* premiered in late January of 1971 in an edited state that bore little

resemblance to the original version. "20th Century had no faith in the movie," Newman recalled. Therefore they dumped the film in neighborhood theaters as a multiple release, and it was out of the theaters in less than two weeks."

*Vanishing Point* was then taken to London, where it became the biggest critical and box office hit of the decade in Britain. Because of the immense popularity of *Vanishing Point* in Britain and Europe, it became a "back door classic" and returned to American theaters on a double bill with *The French Connection*. Thanks to the tremendous popularity of *The French Connection*, *Vanishing Point* finally played to an appreciative American audience. And the cult following began to grow, spurred on by one broadcast on network television in late 1976.

What amazes Newman is that even though *Vanishing Point* hasn't been aired nationally for almost ten years, "Kids still line up along side of me in my car and say 'Hey — Vanishing Point, Man' and give me the thumbs up sign. It's amazing!" Why has *Vanishing Point* become a cult classic? "At the time it was made," Newman explains, "we were still living in the sixties, with the individual against the institutions — the establishment. The individual, the loner, the anti-hero was very, very popular then, and it was a very moving thing when the guy killed himself. When he died, it stayed with people. They came back and saw the film over and over again. I was never

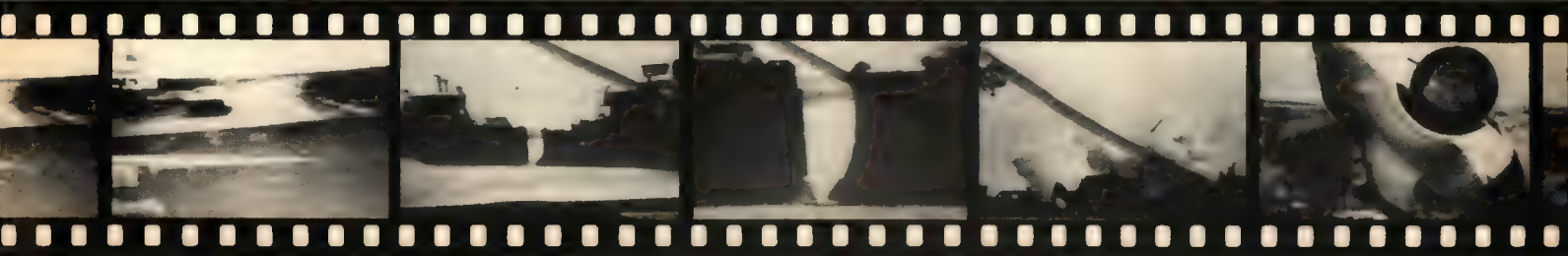
aware of the impact of the film while I was making it."

Newman played Kowalski as "a man who has failed before — and that's the allegorical thing in this film — that Kowalski was going to get through those bulldozers. He smiles as he rushes to his death at the end of *Vanishing Point* because he believes he will make it through the roadblock. Deep down, Kowalski may have believed he wasn't going to make it, but that's the basis of an existentialist film. The hero is fated to die, and you know it when he takes off that he's not going to live. The title *Vanishing Point* was meant not for his impact into the bulldozers. At the beginning of the movie, the Challenger and a black Chrysler pass each other and the Challenger vanishes, and he delivers the black car to Denver. It represents Kowalski's point of no return — it was his vanishing point — it was his last ride."

## Acknowledgements

Our sincerest thanks to Barry Newman and Carey Loftin for taking time out to speak with us. Special thanks to Robert Hilpl who loaned us the *Vanishing Point* videotape and soundtrack album and supplied us with pictures of his Alpine White 1970 Challenger. Special thanks also goes to Jill Kirklander at 20th Century Fox for researching the *Vanishing Point* stills. Also thanks to Mark Warren and Jeff Johnson of the Special Interest Auto Club for their help. Kowalski lives!

CR





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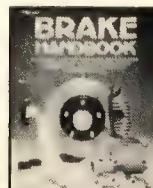
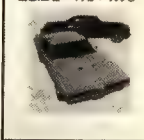
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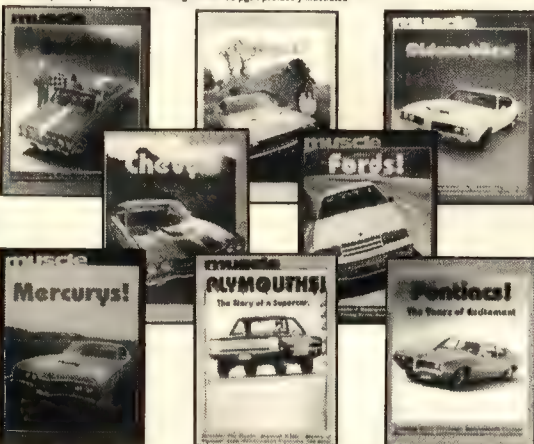


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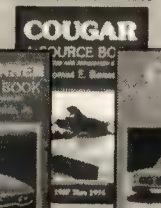


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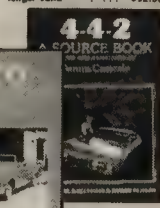


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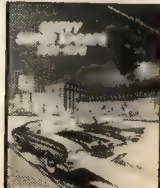
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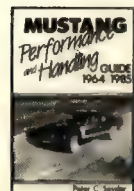




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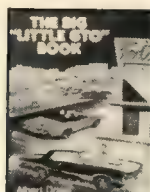
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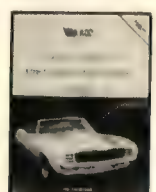
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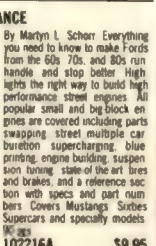
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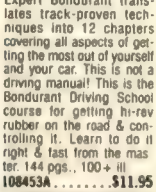
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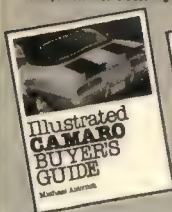
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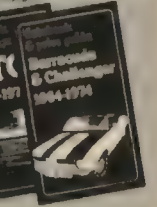
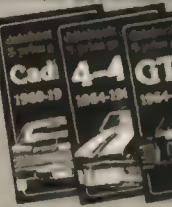
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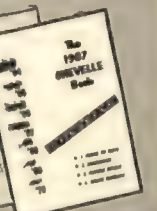
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# ALL AMERICAN SHOOTOUT



A four-way Supercar Shootout in Dallas:  
GTO vs. 390 AMX vs. Cobra Jet Mustang GT vs. Charger Daytona

photos by Jerry Heasley

by Jerry Heasley

**W**hen John Becker wrote from Dallas offering his 18,000-mile 390 AMX for a Supercar Shootout, we tried to match the two-seater AMC against another big-block small-car from north Texas. But which musclecar could we pair off with the AMX? The 400 Firebird, 396 Camaro and 390 Mustang GT are close in cubes, but they are four-seaters. We thought about a 396 Corvette, but the 396 engine for the Corvette was discontinued after one model year, 1965, so they aren't easy to find. Also, Becker figured a 396 Corvette would be too much muscle for his AMX, which certainly ruled out an easier-to-find 427 Corvette.

After Becker's shootout search proved unsuccessful, we took the initiative and phoned Rex Hall, a Mustang performance fan. A few days later, Rex called back, still without a match for the AMX, but offering to run his 1968½ 428 Cobra Jet Mustang against a 440-powered Charger Daytona, owned by friend Del Fisher.

In the meantime, we had contacted Phil Bauman, editor of the

*Classic GTO* newsletter, for help in locating a 400 Firebird. His search proved fruitless, but Phil countered by offering to put his 1968 Ram Air GTO on the strip.

So we found ourselves with four big-block musclecars ready to run, but with no match made in musclecar heaven. So why waste an opportunity? We decided to go ahead and run a big four-way Supercar Shootout, pairing each car against the other in six combinations for six big match-ups.

The four musclecars and their enthusiastic owners met at Green Valley Race City in November. Race conditions were ideal with temperatures in the high 50s, the wind at our backs and the track surface so sticky it felt like the work floor in a glue factory. Here's how the cars stacked up:

**AMX:** Becker was excited. He knew and we knew that his 1968 two-seater was one of the best unaltered AMXs in the country, so it was a perfect supercar shootout candidate. And with traction bars standard, it certainly had the potential to do well on the drag strip.

With 18,653 miles showing, the little

American Motors' coupe looked untouched since new. Options included the "Go" package (power disc brakes, special handling package, Twin-Grip differential, heavy-duty radiator, flex fan and racing stripe), four-speed, 3.54:1 gears, Rally-Pac gauges, Rally wheels with Goodrich T/A radials, AM/FM stereo, power steering and tilt wheel. The over-the-top racing stripe, if you're looking for it, was deleted by the first owner.

Equipped with the dealer-installed AMC camshaft (part number 4486719) and dealer-installed factory headers, Becker's AMX had more power than the standard 390 car.

**Cobra Jet Mustang GT:** Rex Hall is the original owner of this immaculate CJ Mustang hardtop, one of the mid-year 1968½s with the 335-horsepower 428 Cobra Jet big-block. A consistent show winner in the Dallas area, it had been featured in several car magazines.

Like the AMX, Hall's Mustang was ordered with several dealer-installed goodies — a medium-riser aluminum intake manifold, an eight-quart deep sump oil pan, a heavy-duty oil pump and a 427 dual-point distributor. On



shootout day, the Mustang was shod with Goodyear Polyglas tires, OEM F70x14s on the front and wider H60x14s on the rear, on styled steel GT wheels. Additionally, the factory exhaust manifold were uncapped, with no pipes or mufflers.

So the CJ Mustang looked like a sure winner. When the word spread that the Cobra Jet was on the way to the shootout, the AMX, GTO and Daytona owners immediately conceded victory to the Ford. After all, hadn't *Hot Rod*, in the March 1968 issue, called the 1968½ CJ Mustang "the fastest running pure stock in the history of man?"

**Charger Daytona:** It's a superspeedway car, for sure, but Del Fisher wanted to try out his winged Daytona on the drag strip. With a 375-horse 440, TorqueFlite auto and 3:55 gears, it promised plenty of quarter-mile power.

Fisher likes a little more flash, so his 1969 Daytona was fitted with aftermarket Centerline wheels. He also mounted the largest Goodrich Comp T/As that would fit within the wheelwells without having to jack up the car. On the rear was P255 60s. The fronts are P235 60s.

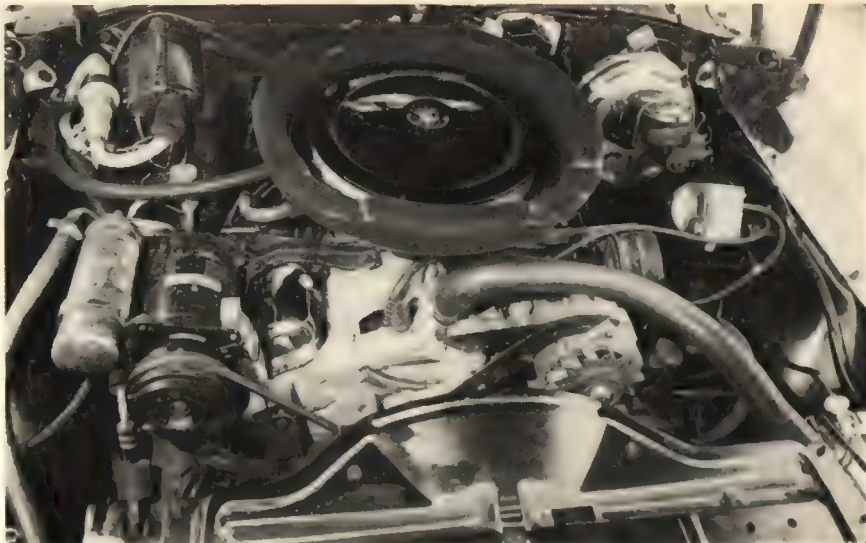
Del also wants the Moparites to know that the white vinyl roof was a dealer add-on, installed to please the original Florida buyer.

**GTO:** Phil Bauman exhibited a lot of good sportsmanship when he offered to enter his 135,000-mile 1968 Ram Air GTO. In addition to weighing nearly two tons, the Pontiac has 2.93:1 gears and nearly every option in the Pontiac book, including air conditioning, automatic transmission, power steering, power disc brakes, power windows, cruise control and Rally wheels. Plus, Phil added a hood tach, factory eight-track tape and GTO wood steering wheel.

The GTO certainly looked like the tamest quarter-miler in our group. Stock right down to the G78x14 tires, its main help would come from a dealer-installed Ram Air package, which upped the output of the 350-horse 400 engine. In fact, back when the car was a 120,000-mile original in 1983, Phil conducted a test for his GTO newsletter and discovered that the Ram Air system improved quarter-mile e.t.s by about two-tenths of a second.

## Shootout One: GTO vs. Mustang CJ

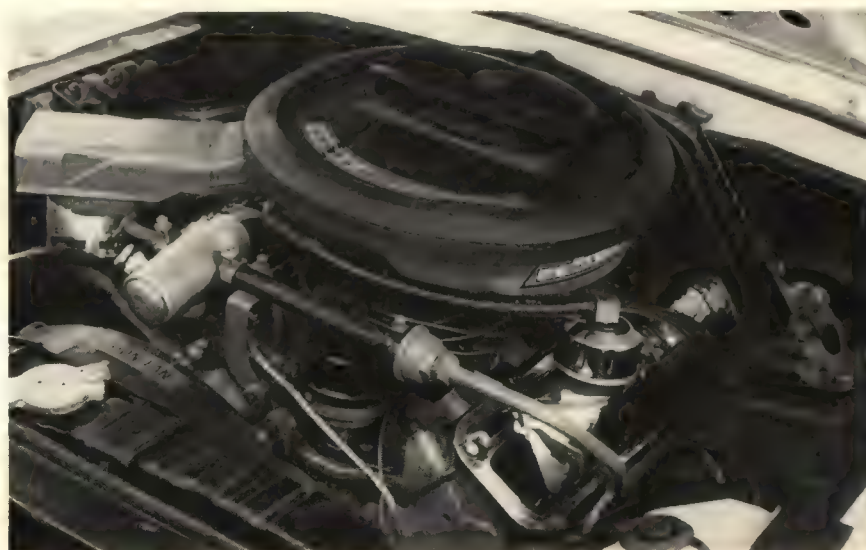
Round one looked like a run-away for the Ford, but as the Mustang moved into the staging lanes, we



The 1968 GTO had the stock 350 horsepower engine, but with dealer-installed Ram Air package.

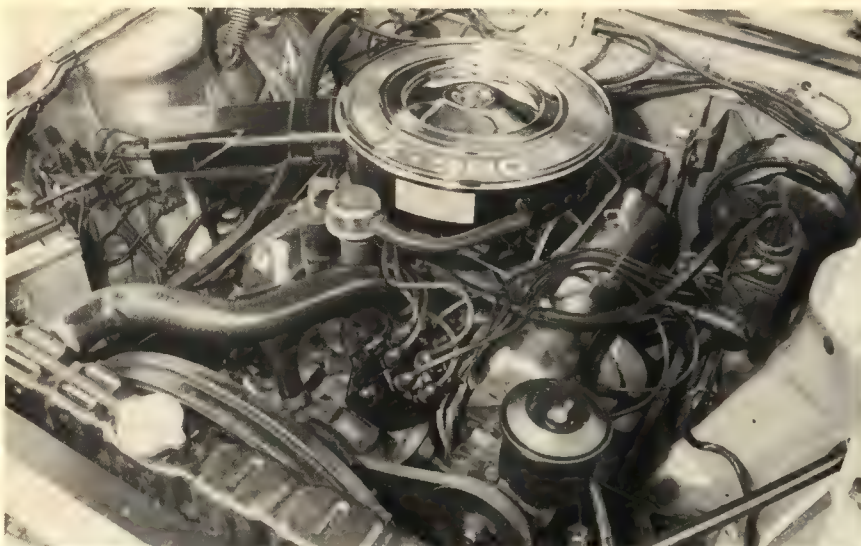


The Cobra Jet got the jump on the GTO at the lights and stayed ahead until the end of the quarter-mile.



The '68½ Mustang GT had a stock 428 Cobra Jet with Ram Air. Underhood was well detailed but engine's internals need freshening.

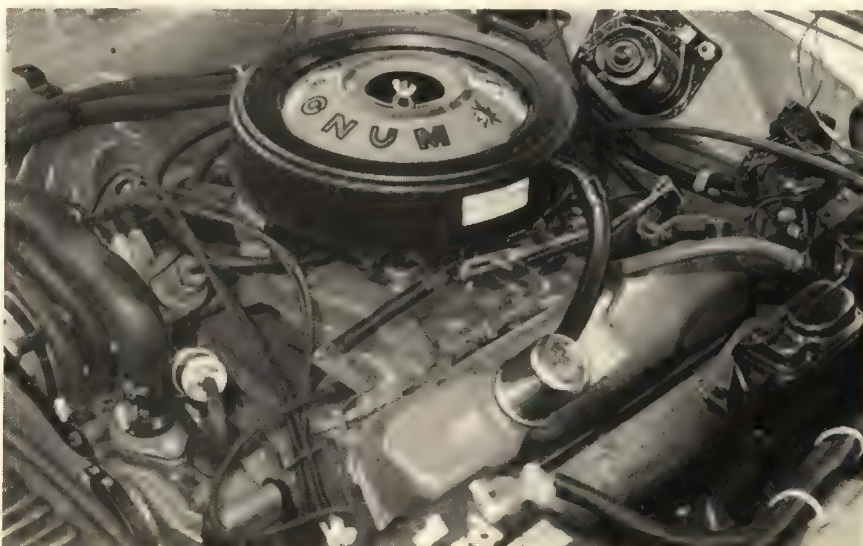




The AMX 390 was a low mileage stocker, if dealer-installed cam kit and headers can be counted as stock. The 390 had a slight lops at idle.



AMX and Daytona left the lights about even, but the AMX started to pull away after about 100 feet, and kept the lead the whole way down the track.



Daytona had just 48,000 miles on the dial and the 440 Magnum engine was as stock as the day it left the factory.

noticed black smoke rolling out of the the tail pipes. Primarily a show car, maybe Hall's hardtop needed some cleaning out. Curiously, Rex had refused to make any preliminary practice passes.

Off the line, the Cobra Jet jumped ahead of the GTO, but a huge cloud of smoke puffed from the rear when Rex hit second gear. The race was close, but the timers declared the Mustang as the winner with a mundane 14.99 @ 90.72 mph to the GTO's 15.17 @ 92.87. The GTO's higher miles-per-hour figure showed that the Pontiac was catching up near the end, its 2.93 gears starting to work.

Back in the pits, everyone was astounded by the Mustang's "slow" time. Maybe the first run "cleared out" the 428. The next run would tell.

### Shootout Two: AMX vs. Daytona

In the staging lanes, the Daytona looked twice the size of the AMX, and what a contrast in staging techniques too. Becker pulled the AMX into the water and roasted the tires, then charged ahead like a raging bull. The crowd in the pits began stirring. What hath AMC wrought? Was this the same 390 that Becker claimed as a low 15-second runner?

Meanwhile, Fisher skipped the water burn-out and chirped the tires a couple of times to clean the tread.

When the tree showed green, the Daytona raised its pointed front end and stayed even with the AMX, which was digging in good and making lots of tire noise — as in UR-R-R-R! But after 100 feet or so, the AMX began pulling ahead. Fisher told us later that he was shifting the TorqueFlite manually, leaving the line at 1200 rpm and shifting at 4500. But when the AMX moved ahead, an over-anxious Fisher over-revved first gear and slowed down. The scoreboard registered a 13.95 @ 101.69 for the AMX versus 14.87 @ 94.63 for the Mopar.

Becker was ecstatic. If the Mustang failed to improve, who could beat the Rambler?

### Shootout Three: GTO vs. AMX

This match-up looked like a no-contest, the AMX already with the quickest e.t. and the GTO with the slowest. More than anything, it would be a chance for the AMX to back up its previous time and get ready for the Cobra Jet. True to form, the AMX won with a consistent 13.96 @ 100.67 while the GTO trailed with a 15.27 @ 94.04



## Shootout Four: Mustang CJ vs. Daytona

With both cars running in the high 14s, the Mustang/Mopar match looked close, unless the CJ could straighten out and fly right. As before, the Daytona reared its head on take-off, the tires biting good with little spin. The Mustang, however, moved away from the line slowly, started to catch up, then slowed down again, still leaving a trail of smoke. The Daytona roared through the traps first, hitting a 14.52 @ 96.25, more than a full second quicker than the Mustang's 15.54 @ 87.04.

Back in the pits, Hall explained that he had experienced a problem with the Mustang's automatic shift linkage. Positioned in first gear, the Mustang started out in second until Rex forced the stick into low. Now the Mustang had three problems to worry about: low engine power, shifter woes and Becker's extremely quick AMX.

## Shootout Five: Daytona vs. GTO

At this point, Bauman's GTO had no wins and two losses, so he wanted badly to beat the Daytona. And it was possible too, if he could get those 2.93 gears into their torque peak off the line. Fisher's Daytona jumped ahead at the start, again with little or no tire spin, while the GTO burned rubber for about twenty feet. Then it was a game



of catch-up. But the Daytona took the win with a 14.67 @ 95.64 compared to the GTO's best time of the day, 15.09 @ 93.36.

In defense of the GTO, with 2.93 gears and 78 series tires, the low 15 times are excellent. And this 400, remember, has 135,000 miles!

## Shootout Six: Mustang CJ vs. AMX

This would be the day's showcase. Although past e.t.s made the AMX the favorite, we thought maybe the Mustang could hit the high 13s if the 428 could start making power. Four years ago in Tulsa, Hall's CJ had dipped into the 13s.

Over in the burn-out lane, the AMX once again stomped back and forth, looking like a real drag car. Quite a show. In the other lane, Hall was

revving the 428, but the big H60s resisted spin.

Away from the lights, the AMX leaped ahead and stayed there all the way down the quarter-mile. The contest was over immediately, the Mustang recording a disappointing 15.15 @ 89.39 while the AMX tripped the lights at 14.13 @ 97.96.

So the little two-seater AMX put them all on the trailer. No one came close to beating Becker, and even with a healthy 428 CJ, Hall's Mustang may have had trouble. In retrospect, the AMX would have indeed given a 396 Corvette some stiff competition. In the August 1968 issue, *Hot Rod* recorded a 14.06 @ 98.40 with a 390 four-speed AMX, so Becker's dealer-cammed 390 four-speed made sense with its 13.95 elapsed times.

Our four-way supercar shootout turned into an AMX tribute.

CR

## QUARTER-MILE RUNS

	AMX		GTO		CJ		DAYTONA	
#1:	14.95	@ 101.69	15.17	@ 92.87	14.99	@ 90.72	14.87	@ 94.83
#2:	13.96	@ 100.67	15.27	@ 94.04	15.54	@ 87.04	14.52	@ 96.25
#3:	14.13	@ 97.86	15.09	@ 93.36	15.15	@ 89.39	14.67	@ 95.64
	WON 3	LOST 0	WON 0	LOST 3	WON 1	LOST 2	WON 2	LOST 1

## SPECIFICATIONS

Model	1968 1/2 Mustang GT	1969 Charger Daytona	1968 GTO	1968 AMX
Engine	428-4V CJ	440-4V	400-4V	390-4V
Factory Horsepower	335 @ 5400	375 @ 4600	350 @ 5000	315 @ 4600
Factory Torque	440 @ 3400	480 @ 3200	445 @ 3000	425 @ 3200
Bore & Stroke	4.130x3.984	4.32x3.75	4.12x3.75	4.165x3.574
Compression Ratio	10.6:1	9.7:1	10.5:1	10.2:1
Carburetion	4V Holley (780)*	4V Carter AVS	Rochester 4V	Carter AFB, 4V
Intake Manifold	cast iron, stock	cast iron, stock	cast iron, stock	cast iron, stock
Distributor	dual point**	single point	single point	single point
Camshaft	stock, hydraulic	stock, hydraulic	stock, hydraulic	dealer installed, hydraulic
Exhaust	stock, duals	stock, duals	stock, duals	dealer installed, headers
Transmission	C-6, 3-speed	TorqueFlite, 3-speed	THM, 3-speed	4-speed manual, Borg-Warner
Final Drive Ratio	3.89:1	3.55:1 Sure Grip	2.93:1 Saf-T-Track	3.54:1 Twin-Grip
Mileage	105,000***	48,000	135,000	18,850
Weight (pounds)	3495	3980	3890	3250
Weight/Power Brake	10.43	10.61	11.11	10.31

\* not stock, 735 Holley was stock

\*\* dealer-installed

\*\*\* 55,000 on engine rebuild



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The first time around (*Car Review*, July, 1985), a 1971 401 Javelin bested 45 other competitors, eliminating a 1965 GTO in the final round with a 14.69 to take home the gold. With our four-way shootout this month, it wasn't so much cagey driving or brute strength that gave John Becker's 390 AMX the edge over more powerful muscle cars.

Instead, the AMX is a good lesson in how select factory options for maximum performance. With dealer-installed cam and headers, Becker's AMX was cranking out more than the advertised 315 horses. That added horsepower wasn't wasted in wheelspin, thanks to factory traction bars. With a combination of the right factory equipment and driving ability, the AMX proved it was a contender. **CR**





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# TECH & SPEC

by Dave Emanuel

## Knock, Knock

I own a 1968 Camaro with a 327 (.030 over) motor in it that consistently knocks under full throttle. The motor has 11:1 compression ratio pistons and a 76 cc combustion chamber, "Hi-Energy" 268 cam, Performer intake manifold with a Holley 750 cfm carb, headers and a stock, single point distributor. The transmission has a shift kit and stock converter and a 12-bolt Posi rear end with 3.31:1 gears and G60-14 tires. A few people have told me to switch to lower ratio gears, put in a torque converter with a 2,500 rpm stall speed and add an adjustable vacuum canister. Do any of these suggestions sound right? I've tried retarding the timing and rejetting the carb with no success.

Jon Iverson  
Portland, OR

*I've got some good news and some bad news. Some of the advice you've gotten is on the mark, but most of it is off by a country mile. Assuming that the cylinder heads weren't milled excessively and that combustion chamber volume is in fact around 76 cc's, your actual compression ratio should be just over 9.0:1. That should be compatible with your cam which has a gross duration 268°. However, the easiest way to cut through all the numbers is to check cranking compression. Pull all the spark plugs, hold the carburetor open and, with a compression gauge mounted in one of the plug holes, spin the engine over with the starter. In this case it isn't necessary to check every cylinder, but as long as you're at it, you might as well; you may find a problem and the data may come in handy in the future.*

*If cranking compression is between 160 and 175, the cam timing is compatible with static compression and therefore should not be the cause of the knocking. If your cranking compression is much over 175, it is probably too high for knock-free operation on pump gasoline. You'll either have to drop the static compression or install a longer duration camshaft. (It may also be that the present cam is over-advanced, causing the problem. You may want to check cam phasing.)*

*Assuming that cranking compression is within range, check your timing by disconnecting and plugging the vacuum advance line. With 10-12 degrees of ini-*

*tial timing, the centrifugal curve should be calibrated to produce a total advance of 36 degrees. If the engine doesn't knock, reconnect the vacuum advance — if the problem returns, you know the source. An adjustable vacuum canister is definitely in order.*

*On the other hand, if you still haven't eliminated the spark knock, potential causes are: spark plug heat range is too hot; head gasket material protruding into the cylinder; shifted timing mark giving you an erroneous reading; vacuum leak; excessively lean air/fuel mixture. Carbon build-up is another potential cause. To clean up the combustion chambers, run the engine at a fast idle (1,500 rpm) and s-l-o-w-l-y pour eight to ten ounces of water into the primary side of the carburetor. Inside the engine, the water will turn to steam and reduce the carbon deposits — just like a water injection unit. (A water injection unit is still one of the best cures for detonation.) Be careful not to pour the water too fast and drown the engine.*

## Bogged Down

I own a 1972 Plymouth 'Cuda. It has 44,000 original miles and is equipped with the 340 four-speed and 3.23 gears. This was the first year that the 340 was detuned. If I understand correctly, '72 340s have compression ratios reduced to 8.5:1, retarded cam timing and 360 heads with smaller valves. The car has a chronic bog that I cannot seem to shake. Do you have any suggestions as to what could be causing this bog, and what can I do to eliminate the problem and step up performance?

Ronald C. Schneider  
Stow, OH

*Typically, when an engine bogs or stumbles, the cause is a momentarily lean condition. The reason that most carburetors have accelerator pumps is that a lag exists from the time the throttle plates are opened until an adequate amount of fuel flows through the main metering circuit. The accelerator pump discharges a shot of fuel into the air stream as a means of "covering" the "hole" in the air/fuel mixture.*

*Your bog problem is most likely related to an accelerator pump shot that is either too little or too late. If you're not*



familiar with carburetors, have an expert take a look at yours.

Regarding improved performance, I'd advise installing a Crane HMV-260 cam (part number 693901) and having a good multi-angle valve job with a little clean-up work in the bowl area. If you can't find a local machine shop to handle the head work at a reasonable cost, contact Ralph Thorne at RMS Racing Engines, 4140 Arcadia Industrial Circle, Lilburn, GA 30247, (404) 923-8802. Ralph does a lot of musclecar engine building so he'll be right in tune with what you need.

The HMV-260 cam idles very smoothly and makes excellent low speed and mid-range torque. In combination with the reworked cylinder heads, your engine will still look and sound stock, but run considerably better. If you'd like a bit more performance, add an Edelbrock Performer intake manifold (part no. 2176), Holley 0-1850 four-barrel carburetor and a set of headers. With this combination of equipment, a hotter camshaft is in order, so I'd recommend a Crane HMV-272 (part no. 693941).

## Disc Needs A Brake

I own a 1969 Camaro RS hardtop. It has a 350 with air conditioning. The car is equipped with drum brakes all the way around. I would like to change it to a front disc brake setup. That is where the problem arises. I've seen this question asked in other car magazines and each time there is a different answer. Some say replace the spindle, rotor and caliper; others say change spindle, rotor, caliper, master cylinder, power booster and proportioning valve.

As if that isn't enough, some magazines say to get these parts only from a '69 Firebird or Camaro with the single piston caliper. Others say '69-'74 Firebirds and Camaros are all the same. Still others throw in the '68-'74 Novas, Venturas and Omegas and claim they are the same. With all the possibilities, who is correct?

Darrel Schimmel  
Hagerstown, MD

Ever heard the old adage, "There's more than one way to skin a cat?" That holds true here — when converting your 1969 Camaro from drum to disc front brakes, there are several options. It is possible to mix and match pieces from several different body types and models if you have a good parts reference. However, the easiest, cheapest and safest way to accomplish your conversion is to duplicate the 1969 stock disc brake set-up. That means finding a 1969-1972 Camaro or Firebird at a wrecking yard and purchasing everything — spindles, calipers,

Continued On Page 58

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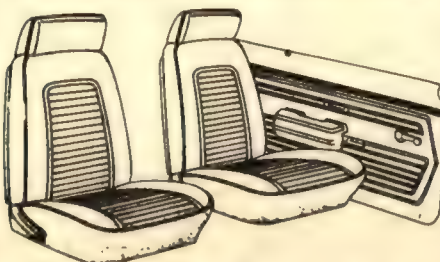
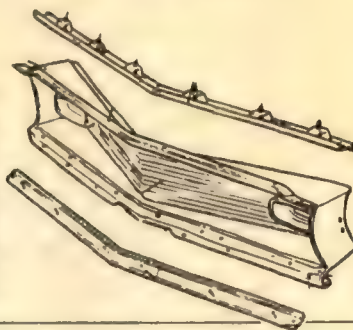
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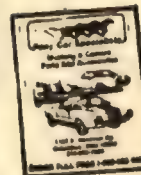


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## TECH&SPEC

Continued From Page 57

rotors, master cylinder and proportioning valve. (Use of the proper proportioning valve is very important.) If your car isn't currently equipped with power brakes, pick up a power booster too.

You could get by with your present master cylinder, but you could run into problems because it doesn't have the same capacity as the one intended for disc/drum applications. You can also get by without a power booster, but pedal effort will be noticeably higher once you get the front discs installed.

For that matter, you could probably get by without any front brakes at all, provided you never had to stop quickly. That's a bit overstated, but the point is, it just doesn't pay to cut corners. If you're going to all the effort to install front discs, do it right. That's why I advise getting everything you need from a car originally fitted with front discs. But before installing the master cylinder or calipers, have them rebuilt to assure that they function properly.

A braking system obviously plays a very important role in vehicle safety, so it is important that any work or rework be done properly. If you're unsure about anything, find someone knowledgeable to look things over and give you a hand.

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## HORSEPOWER

Continued From Page 21

scale, but perhaps the best was saved for the two-door fastback in the Fairlane 500 series and Torino GT. (The latter also came in a notchback two-door hardtop and convertible.) The flowing lines, flat rear window and effective striping on the GT easily rivaled the looks of the more conventional Mopar intermediates and stubby offerings from GM.

Emission standards took effect for 1968 and the 427 was an early victim, only being offered during the first few months of the model year. In its place was the 428 Cobra Jet, which was conservatively advertised at 335 horses, compared to 390 for the 427. The CJ was easier to get through emission testing and proved to be more docile on the street. On the strip it wasn't a whipping boy either.

For the start of the 1969 model year, there were only minor changes for the Fairlane. The grille had a slightly different pattern, the stripes on the GT were flattened out and other small details were included to meet new safety laws and make it easier to tell one year from another. Fastbacks were called SportsRoofs.

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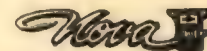
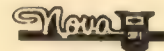
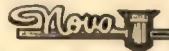
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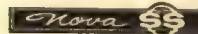
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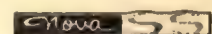
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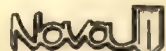
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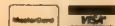
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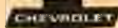


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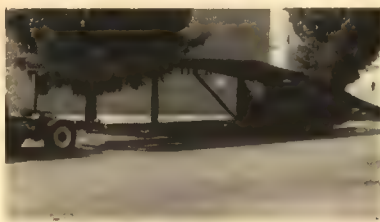
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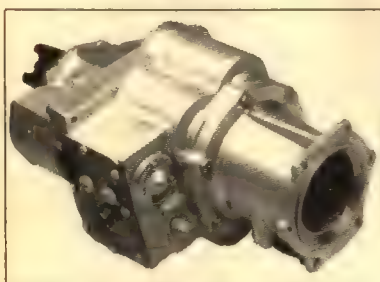
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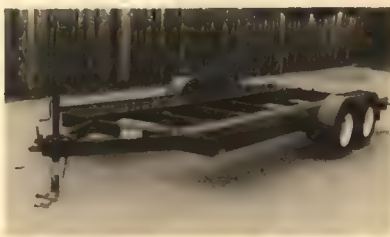


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intermediate market back a step or two in 1968 with its strippo Road Runner, and almost everyone that had a mid-sized car that could burn rubber responded by 1969. Ford's answer was the Cobra, which came in notchback and SportsRoof versions. Standard was the 428CJ, four-speed manual gearbox, heavy-duty suspension, six-inch wheels, F70-14 belted tires and, of course, snake badges in appropriate places. The Ram Air 428 was optional, as were bucket seats, tach and Traction-Lok differential.

No excuses had to be made for the Cobra — on paper. However, intermediate Fords were still having problems in the street fights. *Car Life* tested a Cobra in 1969 and found it capable of quarter-mile runs in 14.9 seconds at 95.2 mph. While this was respectable, it was soundly trounced by a Road Runner (14.7 @ 100.6), Dodge Super Bee (14.7 @ 95.5) and Pontiac GTO Judge (14.5 @ 97.8).

On the race track it was a different story. The Torinos got plenty of respect. The 1969 NASCAR Grand National season was one of factory games of wits and aerodynamics between Ford and Chrysler, not matched before or since. The NASCAR wars would have an effect on the production 1969 Fords in both the Fairlane and Mustang lines.

The first volley was fired in the fall of

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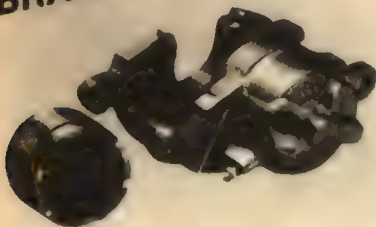
1968, a few weeks into the 1969 model year. Dodge introduced its Charger 500 model, which was to do battle with the Torino and Cyclone fastbacks. It had a flush grille and rear window. But before the 500 ever saw a mile of superspeedway competition, Ford moved the target by bringing out the Torino Talladega, a SportsRoof with an extended nose, flush grille and tilted rear bumper in front — all for aerodynamics. In order to meet rules for production cars, a run of 754 Talladegas was made at Ford's Atlanta plant. They weren't especially fancy, coming with bench seats, C-6 automatic transmissions and regular issue 428 Cobra Jet engines.

Actually, the Talladega was only part of Ford's NASCAR game plan. Ford also had a new big-block design ready for racing, displacing 429 cubic inches with hemispherical heads. Production requirements had to be met for the engines too, but instead of putting the 429s into the Talladegas, the little Mustang was chosen. The result was one of the all-time musclecar classics, the Boss 429.

When the 1969 racing season was over, David Pearson repeated as the NASCAR champion, driving a Talladega for Holman-Moody. Fords won the most races, 26, followed by Dodge with 22.

True to the schedule, the

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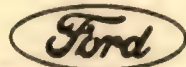


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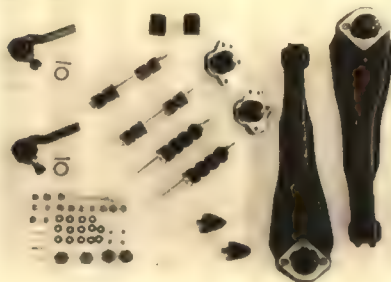


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intermediate Torino was completely restyled for 1970. Of most interest was the SportsRoof, which instead of a flat backside had a concaved one. While its advertising copy writers were turning up phrases like "shaped by the wind," Ford's race teams were finding out that the 1969 models were some five miles an hour faster on the superspeedways.

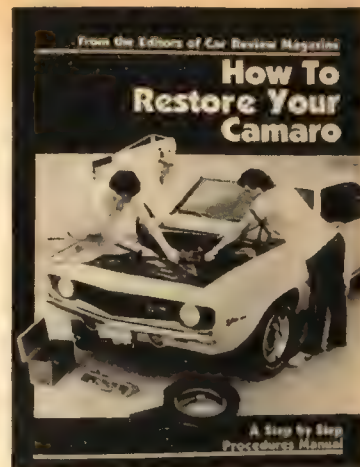
With the Charger Daytona and its new teammate in the Mopar stable, the Plymouth Road Runner SuperBird applying pressure, Ford was in the uncomfortable position of having to let its factory teams race year-old cars while promoting the new ones. An effort to put a sleek nose on the 1970 Torino, the King Cobra, was still-born.

Ford pulled out of most forms of racing after the 1970 season and as a result, the 1969 models were raced in the 1971 campaign as well (though in NASCAR most teams used the Mercury Cyclone configuration). Short trackers also picked up on the 1968-69 Torino fastbacks for their car bodies and furthered the successful image fostered by the style.

As a race car, the 1968-1969 Ford Torino created a legend. On the street, it fell somewhat shy. For normal people, that probably never caused much of a problem.

As for this corner, illogical disappointment was the end result.

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**February 22, 23: Monticello, Iowa.** 17th Annual Rod and Custom Car Show. Youth Center Building. Street rods, customs, street machines, race cars, trucks, motorcycles and sports cars. Cash and trophy awards plus travel money. Contact: Ralph Muller, 853 Southaven Drive, Monticello, Iowa 52310, (319) 465-5119.

**March 8, 9: Indianapolis, Indiana.** Third Annual Parts-O-Rama at the Expo Building, Indiana State Fairgrounds. Sponsored by the Performance Ford Club of America. Contact: PFCA, 116 Kirk Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46234, (317) 271-7119.

**March 9: Hillside, Illinois.** Super Model Car Sunday at the Hillside Holiday Inn, 4400 Frontage Road. Model car contest and swap meet. Admission \$2.25, under 12 \$1.00. Contact: Tom Lima, Jr., 1933 N. Sedgwick St., Chicago, IL 60614, (312) 642-5131 after 6 p.m.

**March 9: Columbus, Ohio.** First Annual Indoor Muscle-car Swap Meet sponsored by the GTO Association of Central Ohio and Haydoo Pontiac, 101 Phillipi Road, Columbus, OH 43228. Admission \$1. Contact: Neal Blankenship, (614) 459-0352 or Andy Sirkin (614) 766-0348.

**March 15, 16: Chicago, Illinois.** Chevyfest/Vettefest Spring '86 at McCormick Place. Chevrolet/Corvette showcars and parts exhibitors. Contact: Mid America Promotions, P.O. Box 52, Willow Springs, IL 60480, (312) 265-9500.

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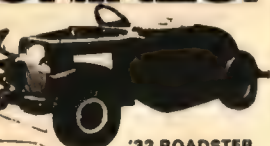
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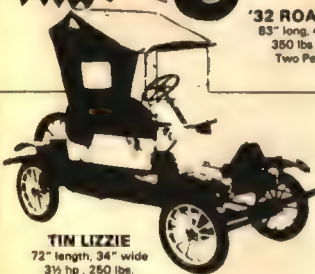
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**April 13: Bakersfield, California.** Musclecar Shootout at Bakersfield-Famosa Dragstrip. Contact: Musclecar Shootout, P.O. Box 21543, Concord, CA 94518, (415) 825-8912.

**April 13: Cypress, California.** Spring Fever Mopar Show 'N' Shine at Cypress College. Sponsored by the Rapid Transit System Mopar Club and Winged Warriors. Contact: RTS Mopar Club, 1213 S. Driftwood Dr., Santa Ana, CA 92704, (714) 531-2398 or (714) 496-5277 evenings.

**April 17, 18, 19, 20: Carlisle, Pennsylvania.** Spring Carlisle '88 Collector Car Flea Market and Corral at the Fairgrounds. 7300 spaces plus 1500 cars for sale. Contact: The Flea Marketeers, 1000 Bryn Mawr Road, Carlisle, PA 17013, (717) 243-7855.

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**May 23, 24, 25: Rockford, IL.** 13th Annual "April in Rockford" (now in May) collector car auction, show, swap meet and car corral at the Winnebago Expo Complex. Contact: AIR Promotions, Box 368, Foreston, IL 61030, (815) 938-2668.

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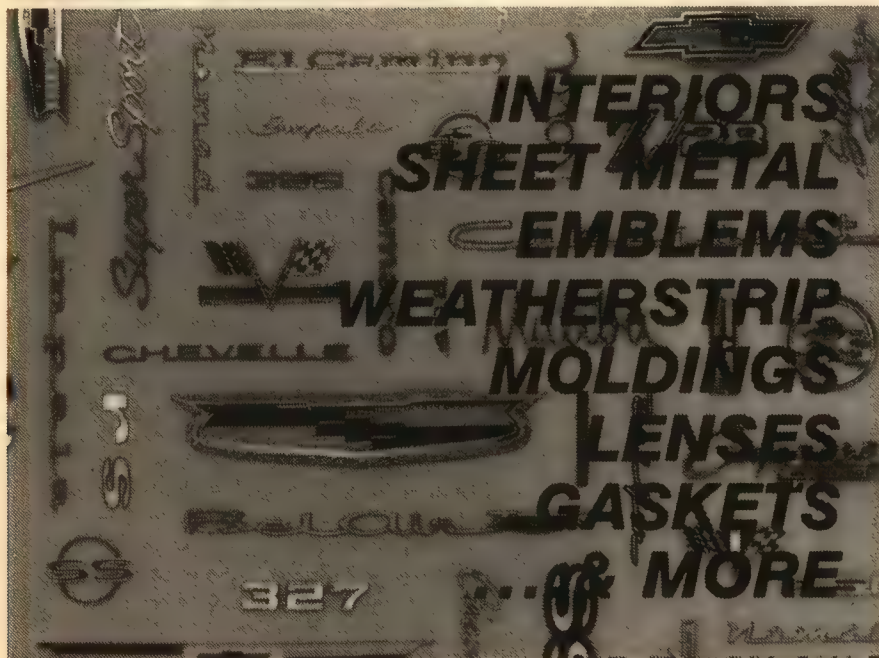


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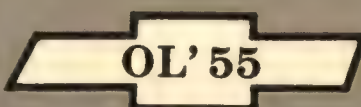
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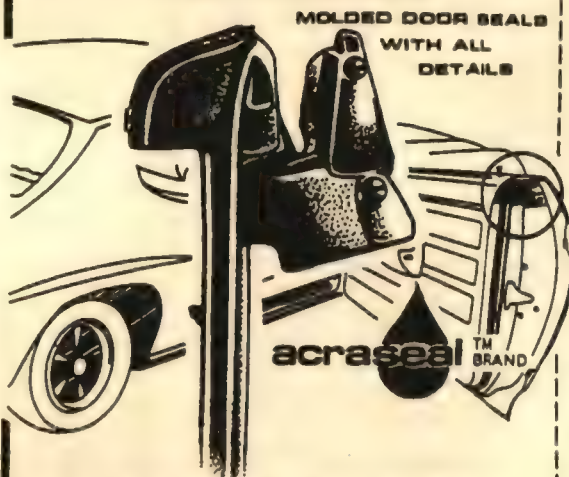
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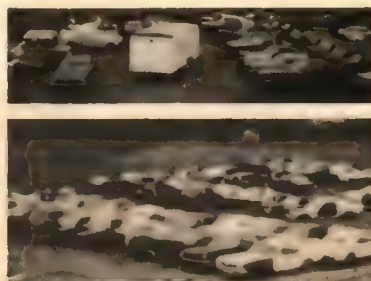
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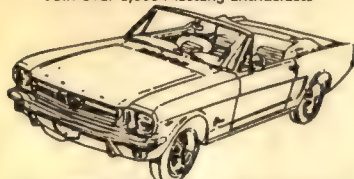
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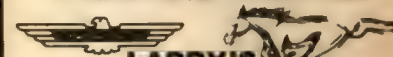
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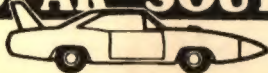
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